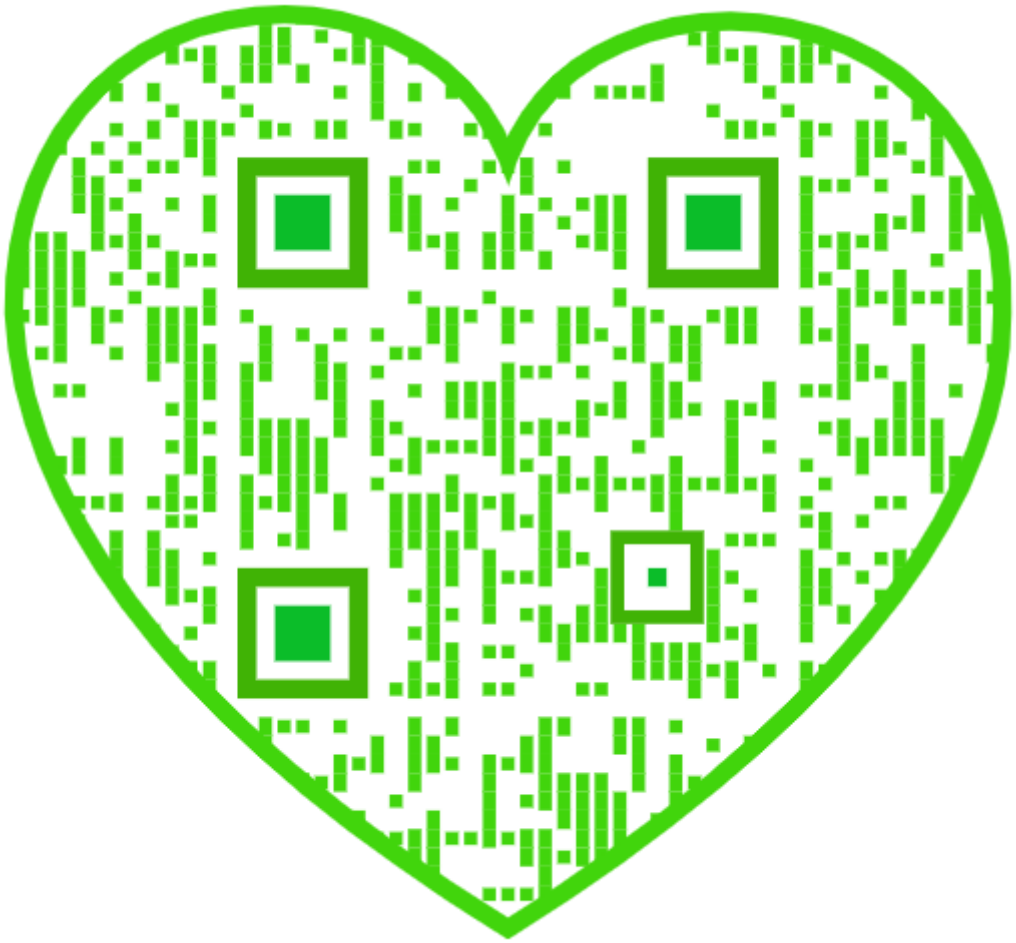

Thos. T. Eckert

THE

MILITARY TELEGRAPH

DURING THE

CIVIL WAR IN THE UNITED STATES,

WITH

AN EXPOSITION OF ANCIENT AND MODERN MEANS OF COMMUNICATION AND OF THE FEDERAL AND CONFEDERATE CIPHER SYSTEMS,

ALSO A

RUNNING ACCOUNT OF THE WAR BETWEEN THE STATES.

BY

WILLIAM R. PLUM, LL.B.,

OF THE CHICAGO BAR.

VOL. II

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THE

MILITARY TELEGRAPH

DURING THE

CIVIL WAR IN THE UNITED STATES.

CHAPTER I.

THE TELEGRAPH IN THE GETTYSBURG CAMPAIGN.

The terrible failures at Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville would have destroyed the *morale* of troops less devotedly patriotic than were those of the Army of the Potomac. Nothing short of deep convictions as to the justness of the Federal cause; of intense determination to maintain it, cost what it might; of an abiding faith that in the end the right would prevail; of the proud martial spirit of its rank and file, and of the unflagging belief that the powers of the Governments, National and State, were being steadily and energetically exercised to support and strengthen this great army, could have saved it after its losses in many struggles, seemingly fruitless, except in wounds and deaths, from disintegration and utter ruin. Across the Rappahannock lay a hostile army, emboldened and elated by success until it thought itself invincible. Large reinforcements were crowding to it, including especially Longstreet's forces from near Suffolk, Virginia. Supplies were abundant, genial weather at hand and a promise of a campaign of invasion of the enemy's country — a project always dear to the confident warrior — these things and a belief that can not be denied most of them, that theirs was a just cause, made Lee's soldiers an army of astonishing power. More than Maryland, Pennsylvania, Delaware and the District, more than the States it might hope to traverse, it threatened even the autonomy of the Union, as never before.

The rebellion was working up its flood tide, and that we may understandingly observe the dangerous sweep of the forces that, passing through mountain defiles, down the Shenandoah, across the Potomac and to the west of South Mountains, through Maryland, to Chambersburg, Carlisle and York, were destined to concentrate and break in shattered, shivering masses against the rock-ribbed defenses and iron-willed defenders of Gettysburg, let us pause to note some of the interesting details leading up to the climax.

The Confederate chieftain had to watch the movements of the Federals operating from four centers. To the north lay General Schenck's "Middle" Department. His force was mainly at Harpers Ferry, Martinsburg and Winchester, in all, say, eighteen thousand effectives. To the north-east was Heintzelman's Department of Washington, in which were thirty-six thousand troops. Across the river, in Lee's front, was Hooker's army, numbering, on the 10th of June, seventy-eight thousand, two hundred and fifty-five men; and south-east was the Department of Virginia and North Carolina, the main force, viz., fourteen thousand men, being with General Peck at Suffolk, Virginia.

Lee had no telegraphic communication north of Culpeper, and little need of any, prior to his advance. But the Federal telegraphic system, as heretofore, included all of their positions above indicated, and also, at times, as far out on the Orange & Alexandria road as Bealeton.

Rumors of Lee's intended movements were rife; they were even published in Confederate papers, just as those of Sherman's march from Atlanta were freely circulated in that city and published in Federal papers prior to its beginning. The very publicity of both seems to have induced disbelief as to the truthfulness of the reports. On the 2d of June, Peck telegraphed Dix, Dix, Halleck, and Halleck, Hooker, that "citizens and soldiers" about Richmond "talked of Lee's moving into Maryland with eighty-five thousand men;" but on the fourth General John Buford, in immediate command of three divisions of cavalry and ten pieces of artillery, along the Orange & Alexandria Railroad, wired Hooker *via* the War Department that the country as far up as Thoroughfare Gap was visited on the third, and nothing was seen or heard of the enemy.

The line from Bealeton to Falmouth had been abandoned some time before and the Bealeton and Warrenton Junction offices closed, but now that indications pointed to activity on the part of Lee's command, the cavalry was made to watch the fords more closely, and the wire was rebuilt to advance cavalry headquarters. Operators J. H. Emerick and J. D. Tinney were on the third sent from the War Department with cipher despatches, to await, at the Junction, the arrival of Buford, who was out on a raid. By the seventh, the line was rebuilt to Bealeton, and Emerick was sent there at midnight, under escort, to open the office. The next day he was assisted by J. D. Flynn, from Union Mills office.

Preparations were soon completed for a cavalry movement under General Pleasanton, in full force, across the river, to be supported by three thousand infantry, with the view of striking Stuart, who was meditating a blow at the Orange & Alexandria and Baltimore & Ohio railroads, in aid of Lee's operations. On the ninth, a severe engagement was fought, lasting, says Pleasanton, fourteen hours, and resulting in delaying the intended raid. From Rappahannock Station, Pleasanton telegraphed Hooker authentic and highly important information of the concentration of large bodies of infantry and cavalry about Culpeper. Operator Emerick wrote in his diary, "Plenty of cipher work; wounded being brought here rapidly, many of them with saber wounds, which prove the nature of the engagement." Mr. Doren's building party began, on the eleventh, to restore the line from Falmouth to Bealeton, and Hooker commenced moving forces to checkmate Lee's undeveloped purposes. A loop was built from Warrenton Junction to Pleasanton's headquarters near by, on the twelfth, and Joe S. Kirby, an operator, was detailed from a cavalry regiment to assist there. By the fourteenth, it was clearly ascertained that Lee was indeed moving north with a view, it was believed, of entering Maryland and perhaps Pennsylvania.

On the thirteenth, the evacuation of Falmouth and vicinity began; the great army by many routes was in motion. Operator L. A. Rose was the last to close office at the front and took the last train for Acquia Creek and Alexandria. Operators S. H. Edwards and E. A. Hall, with General Sigel at Stafford

Court House, where they had delighted in Hope Landing baked shad, stuffed with beans, were ordered to General Meade's head-quarters, to reach which they had to ride through the Eleventh Corps. While they were passing, the soldiers started the rhyme:

> Let the telegraphers through;
> They'll get us into a fight,
> And out of it, too.

The army was now fairly *en route*, no one knew just whither. A. H. Caldwell and J. B. Pierce were with Hooker; C. C. McConnell and F. N. Benson were with one of the corps; E. A. Hall with Howard, S. H. Edwards with Hancock, and A. H. Bliss, R. H. Ryan, T. H. Fonda, H. W. Cowan, J. D. Tinney, J. H. Glazier, R. F. Weitbrecht, L. A. Rose and F. T. Bickford either accompanied corps head-quarters or reached their respective stations *via* Washington and Poolesville in apt time. David E. Rand, who had served with his cavalry regiment since October, 1861, and participated in the battles of Front Royal, Cedar Mountain, second Bull Run and Chantilly, and was captured near Philmont, Virginia, and sent to Libby, being exchanged, was detailed in June and ordered to relieve operator Bliss at General Abercrombie's head-quarters at Centreville. While there, the northward movement of the army caught him and he, by direction, joined General John Newton's division of the Second Army Corps, followed it to Poolesville and Frederick City, from which latter point he was sent to Baltimore and thence to Fort Stevens, one of the defenses of the capital. G. W. Baldwin and J. W. Sampson were at this time operating at General Schenck's head-quarters, in Baltimore; C. W. Moore and S. K. Rupley, at Harpers Ferry, Va.; R. R. McCaine, at Winchester, Va.; Chas. C. Ways, at Martinsburg, Va.; D. C. Aughinbaugh, at Hagerstown, Md, besides whom there were sixty-six other operators variously stationed throughout the department. Emerick with Pleasanton started on the seventeenth, indirectly for Aldie, making a ride of about sixty miles. On the twentieth, being hopelessly distant from any telegraph, he returned to the War Department, where he reported late operations of the cavalry against the enemy, and was complimented by Major Eckert for the performance of recent services which were very

trying—so much so that Emerick was prostrated for about three weeks.

The enemy very suddenly appeared about Winchester, in the valley, where Milroy was in command of about seven thousand five hundred men. While strong indications pointed to a general movement of the enemy down the Shenandoah, it was quite uncertain, until Milroy (who, it seems, was not well advised by his superiors in command) felt the pressure of the Confederates as early as the twelfth, but from disbelief remained until hemmed in. On the night of the thirteenth, the telegraph was cut, and nothing more was known of Milroy until a part of his force having, after a severe fight, cut their way out of the rebel environment, reached the Potomac on the fifteenth. The loss of communication with Winchester and Martinsburg—for that line also went down at seven, P. M., of the fourteenth, while the operator was reporting the progress of an attack upon that place—was severely felt by General Hooker and the authorities at Baltimore and Washington. All plans were entangled by an "if." "If," says the President to Hooker, by wire, "the head of Lee's army is at Martinsburg, and the tail of it on the plank road between Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville, the animal must be very slim somewhere. Could you not break him?" "To proceed," replied Hooker, "to Winchester, and have him make his appearance elsewhere, would subject me to ridicule." However, by the evening of the fifteenth, positive evidence was at hand that the enemy was moving toward the Potomac.

The Martinsburg garrison having reached Harpers Ferry, the force there was swelled to about eleven thousand men. Except the railroad line, the only wire intact from the Ferry ran direct to the war office. The troops evacuated the town and took position across the river, on Maryland Heights. The pontoon was taken up and the planking on the railroad bridge removed. Operator Moore and two mounted orderlies alone held the post. Major Eckert had ordered Moore to remain as long as the line was "O. K." This he did until about eleven, P. M., of the sixteenth, when General Tyler, commanding on the Heights, sent over an orderly with the countersign and a note, asking "what the devil," he, Moore, "wanted in Harpers Ferry after all the troops had left?" and directing him to report at head-quarters

immediately. On hearing this, Eckert, at one, A. M., allowed Moore to go. His little party forded the river safely, and an hour later the enemy were in the town. Some hours before this, however, General Jenkins' Confederate cavalry had dashed into Chambersburg, Pa.

The Government was now thoroughly aroused. The prospects were gloomy enough. Harrisburg, Philadelphia, Baltimore and Washington were especially threatened. Throughout the North, crowds hung about the bulletin boards and telegraph offices, eagerly devouring the latest news. The President telegraphed the Governor of Maryland for ten thousand troops, Pennsylvania for fifty thousand, New York for twenty thousand, Ohio for thirty thousand, and West Virginia for ten thousand. These calls were again telegraphed to every city and town in those States, by their respective Governors. The telegraph was busy everywhere. Business was regulated by the ebb and flow of the Union fortunes. Newspapers in those days were very largely composed of telegrams and telegraphic correspondence, but at this time when every hour was pregnant with great events, only government messages had the right of wire. In the expressive language of operators, the lines were kept "red-hot" with military despatches. Death messages were rushed through, not to say smuggled, whenever possible, but ordinary business and reports for the press were delayed hours after the contending armies were silent in sleep. Offers to bribe operators to prefer one press report over another were not unknown. The newspaper rivalry became very great. This was natural, as every hour brought news more dire than the preceding, and millions of men and women were seeking to allay their fears by telegraphic reports.

A portion of Hooker's army crossed the Potomac on the 26th of June. About the twenty-fourth, the Second Corps, encamped in the vicinity of Thoroughfare Gap, was ordered forward. Its commander, General Hancock, having been in telegraphic communication with an officer (probably Hooker), at Gainsville, and having said good-bye at its close, the Gainsville operator, to complete the circuit with Washington, connected his ground wire with the main line, as Thoroughfare Gap office was then to be abandoned; but after riding a short distance,

Hancock recalled an important matter which he had forgotten, and asked Edwards, his operator, if he could raise Gainsville office again. Edwards replied that if the ground connection was imperfect, he might succeed, but the chances were against it, and, moreover, he did not like the looks of the "Johnnies" in the woods beyond. Hancock directed him to go and do what he could, adding, "My men will cover you." It was arranged that, if Edwards succeeded, he was to raise his hat as a signal, when a force was to be sent to get the line in a proper place for the General. But Edwards was unsuccessful, and as he was climbing a hill on his return, the Confederates opened fire on him, which was promptly and vigorously returned by Union troops. "I never felt so grateful in my life," writes Edwards, "as I did then to General Hancock, for shielding me. The tears came. I could not stop them, and when the General said 'You've got lots of grit, for a civilian,' I felt more thankful than before."

The position of the seven army corps, respectively, and of the cavalry forces, was frequently despatched to the War Department telegraph office, where Mr. Lincoln, Mr. Stanton and General Halleck spent much of their time. Cipher operator, A. B. Chandler, in the War Department, observed, during this movement, that Mr. Lincoln was especially anxious to keep himself informed of the position of the Fifth Corps, then commanded by General Meade. Hooker's telegrams were unsatisfactory to the Government during this march of his army. He complained of lack of men and means, and on the 27th of June, sent Halleck a telegram, saying that his original instructions required him to cover Harpers Ferry and Washington; that he had then imposed upon him, in addition, an enemy in his front, of more than his number; begged to be understood that he could not comply with such conditions with the means at his disposal, and requested to be relieved from the position he then occupied. Whether he intended to ask to be relieved from command, or from the treble task he said was imposed upon him, was not perfectly clear, but assuming the former, the Government relieved him by placing General Meade in his stead. Meade immediately telegraphed from Frederick, in brave and soldierly, yet modest language his acceptance. While Chandler was translating this

cipher message, the President was looking over his shoulder, watching with great interest the words as Chandler deciphered them, and seemed to feel great relief when he knew that Meade was in command. Relieving a commander of a large army while an important battle was impending, has been spoken of by able officers as extremely dangerous in practice, if not historically unprecedented; but McClellan was superseded by Burnside on what was thought to be the eve of battle, as the former expected to move on the enemy at Culpeper near by. However, in these days of railroads and telegraphs, precedents have to give way to many innovations.

The wires converging towards Meade's head-quarters in Maryland, in June, were, from Washington *via* Poolesville to Point of Rocks, Maryland, Point of Rocks to Frederick City, and thence three miles to the toll-gate. Other lines followed the route of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad to Frederick City and more yet on the main line of the Northern Central road to Hanover Junction and Harrisburg. From the Junction the line originally connected Gettysburg *via* Hanover, but the rebels destroyed that for many miles. From Poolesville a line was constructed to Leesburg, Virginia, and from Point of Rocks to Harpers Ferry. On the 28th of June, General J. E. B. Stuart, commanding the bulk of the Confederate cavalry, crossed the Potomac and sweeping north to the right of Meade and by way of Westminster, succeeded, after dark, in severing all of the telegraphs by which Meade could speedily communicate with General French, then commanding at Harpers Ferry, Schenck, at Baltimore, Couch, who commanded a new department with head-quarters at Harrisburg, and the authorities in Washington. For several days, Meade's telegrams were forwarded to the nearest office by couriers, one of whom was killed June 30, near Glen Rock, while bearing a long cipher despatch, detailing Meade's plans and operations. Arrangements were also made to run an express train every three hours to Westminster with despatches for Frederick City, But Meade and the authorities in Pennsylvania, impatient at these necessary delays, sought to re-establish the wires. In a general order of June 30, Meade directed that "a telegraph corps * work east from Hanover, repairing, and all commanders * work repairing the line in their vi-

cinity between Gettysburg and Hanover." About the same time, L. D. McCandless, of the Telegraph Corps, left Frederick for Hanover Junction, to work west with his builders, but the redoubtable Colonel Thomas A. Scott, assisted considerably by General Haupt, both eminent railroad officials, succeeded in restoring the line to Hanover in time for Meade's use at the close of the battle, if not earlier.

On the first day of July, Meade's head-quarters being about Taneytown, he received from Generals Couch and Schenck his first information that Lee's army was not marching for the Susquehanna, but was likely to concentrate at Gettysburg. One of these despatches was received at Frederick City over the newly repaired line to Baltimore at one o'clock on the morning of the first, and given to operators Ten Eyck H. Fonda and L. A. Rose, with instructions to carry it to General Meade as rapidly as possible. These young men performed their task so faithfully that on their return they were complimented by the Secretary of War. Over roads unknown to them, from one o'clock A.M., until five fifteen, they dashed at the rate of eight miles an hour until they found the General, to whom they delivered the message. Major Eckert, in an annual report, says:

> At the beginning of the fiscal year, the Army of the Potomac, under command of Major General Meade, was in the vicinity of Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. Telegraph wire, instruments, material, etc., together with a full force of builders and operators, were on hand with the army, but the Commanding General did not think it expedient to have telegraph lines established to the army. Communication was kept up, however, by means of a line of couriers from Frederick City, Maryland, and from Hanover, Pennsylvania, to both of which points we telegraphed directly from the War Department.

While Meade was at Taneytown, thirteen miles distant, contemplating the line of Pipe Creek, where he proposed to receive the enemy, the battle of Gettysburg, about ten A. M., of the first, unknown and unanticipated by either commanding general, was ushered in. Precious time, involving precious lives, and the demoralization of two corps of the Federal army, was passing, while Meade was being informed by courier of the thrilling events transpiring beyond his power of direction, and

incalculably momentous to his army, the Government, the Union, the world. When the battle began, Meade's army was located about as follows: the Third Corps at Emmitsburg, the Sixth at Manchester, the Second at Taneytown, the Twelfth at Two Taverns, the Fifth at Hanover, the First and Eleventh at Gettysburg, with a portion of the cavalry. Too much credit can not be awarded Meade and his corps commanders for their diligence in concentrating at Gettysburg, when that new line of defense was determined upon. For three days, these great armies, nearly equally matched, for they had respectively something over seventy thousand men, strove to destroy each other. Whichever forced the fighting was doomed already. In the providence of God, the Confederates took the offensive on the first and continued it throughout. The night of the first, Buford's cavalry, which had made itself immortal, the gallant First Corps and the unfortunate Eleventh, rallied on Cemetery Hill, back of Gettysburg, whither they had been driven in confusion by the advance of the enemy.

The meagre tidings of this day's encounter that reached the tempest-tossed North were eagerly devoured by a news-famishing people, whose appetite it but whetted, even as the salt draught from the ocean increases the thirst of the ship-wrecked mariner. The second day came, and ere its sun set behind the distant hills, the victims of another day's dreadful conflict lay motionless or helpless on the sod where they had valorously dared, and yet the result was in the balance. All night long the nearest telegraph offices are busied with orders, private messages and correspondence. Operators of the various companies in the land are alert to catch each passing report. "Any news?" ask the distant points along the Pacific coast, while yet the conflict rages. "Any news?" asks the sympathetic Canadian, while yet the sun is high. "Give us news; we must have news," say New York, Pittsburgh and Washington. "Tell us of the hour; is our city safe?" demand those of Harrisburg and Philadelphia, which is re-echoed from Baltimore. Henceforth, until the end comes, business must suspend. Mothers, whose sons are there; wives, whose husbands are there; sisters, whose brothers are there; maidens, whose hearts are there, and the patriot, whose hopes center there; all, all join in beseeching God to be there also; to

grant a glorious victory and save those nearest and dearest. "No news is bad news" the saying goes, and as the second day's battle did not fairly begin until four P. M., many were the downcast looks of those who believed the War Department was withholding evil tidings. At eleven P. M., General Meade wrote the following telegram for General Halleck, but for some reason it did not reach Washington until 5:15 P. M. of the third:

> The enemy attacked me about four, P. M., this day, and after one of the severest contests of the war, was repulsed at all points. We have suffered considerably in killed and wounded. Among the former is Brigadier General Paul Zook, and among the wounded, Generals Sickles, Barlow, Graham, and Warren slightly. We have taken a large number of prisoners. I shall remain in my present position to-morrow, but am not prepared to say, until better advised of the condition of the army, whether my operations will be of an offensive or defensive character.

Brave Paul Zook! He was an old-time telegrapher, having learned the art at a time when telegraph magnets weighed one hundred pounds instead of about one pound, as now made, and the comprehension of electrical matters compared with the present was about an inverse ratio to the weight of metal used. Zook was in that part of the conflict which Swinton, in his "The Twelve Decisive Battles of the War," speaks of as "where hot battle boiled and bubbled as though it were some great hell-cauldron."

The third came, bringing new hopes and fears, responsibilities and dangers—bringing on afresh the great battle which was ushered in by the use, some say, of more cannon than had ever before been employed in any single battle. With the repulse of the brave eighteen thousand, massed for the charge to break the Union lines, the star of the Confederacy began to wane. Happy North! Independence day brought news of a great victory. It was, indeed, a glorious Fourth. Bonfires, the ringing of bells, fireworks, all betokened it. In one short day the news traveled across the continent and made glad all the people in the settled districts north of the Confederacy. On that day, also, General Pemberton surrendered his army and Vicksburg to General Grant. As the news from Vicksburg was received at

Memphis, the tidings from Gettysburg went down from Cairo. Passing onward by despatch boat to Cairo, the news of Grant's remarkable achievements flashed to the East by the way of Cincinnati, to the North from Chicago, and to the West from St. Louis, and officially to all points from Washington, turning the people from joy to wild delight, from gladness to grateful thanksgiving. The armies of the Potomac and Tennessee had broken the clouds that hung like a pall over the Union, and the telegraph in the hands of several thousand operators had spread the great news so quietly and unostentatiously that the people thought not of its wonderful workings, nor of the patient endurance of its operatives, nor, in their excess of zeal to spread the great news, did the commercial telegraphers themselves then, nor have they since, thought of any other recompense or reward, than the consciousness of having unburdened many a heavy heart and relieved many a doubt-sick soul.

At the head of the Government, however, was an appreciative soul, over-burdened with solicitude. Speaking of him and passing events, Mr. Chandler, before quoted, said:

> I shall never forget the painful anxiety of those few days when the fate of the nation seemed to hang in the balance; nor the restless solicitude of Mr. Lincoln, as he paced up and down the room, reading despatches, soliloquizing and often stopping to trace the map which hung on the wall; nor the relief we all felt when the fact was established that victory, though gained at such fearful cost, was, indeed, on the side of the Union.

Of the losses in the three days fighting, General Meade reported 2,834 killed, 13,709 wounded, and 6,643 missing—23,186 in all, on the Union side; and a careful estimate of the Confederates, places them at 5,500 killed, 27,500 wounded, and several thousand prisoners, aggregating according to yet another estimate a loss of 36,000 men—a total loss to the two armies of nearly as many men as were engaged in reforming governments of Europe at the battle of Waterloo.

Immediately after the battle, operators Edwards and E. A. Hall were sent to Hanover, Pa., seventeen miles north of Gettysburg, to open an office on the line belonging to the railroad company, which was run into General Schenck's head-quarters

office, at Baltimore, from whence it connected with the War Department. The operators arrived about five, A.M., of the fourth, and, finding the doors of the station fastened by great padlocks, they broke open the window with stones and clambered in. While in the act of connecting their instrument, the Superintendent of the road, Mr. Eichelbergher, came running to the depot with fifteen or twenty men, and demanded of the operators, in a loud voice, "By what authority do you break into this depot?" Edwards presented a blank U. S. M. T. envelope, as being the best evidence he had of his authority, but that proved enough. As the Confederate States troops had torn down the line running thence to Gettysburg, strenuous efforts were made to rebuild it, which was first done temporarily—the repairers using for the purpose scraps of stove-pipe and odd pieces of wire. These were fastened to the necks of old bottles that were placed in the crotches of trees, where they held and insulated the line. Edwards started from Hanover with the builders, but on reaching a small stream near Gettysburgh, where a bridge had been burned, it was found that the wire had shrunk so that the two ends could not be brought together. In hunting about, Edwards discovered in the stream some old soda bottles and an iron rail. The latter was propped up so as to rest on the bottles, and the ends of the line connected with those of the rail. Thus was communication first established between Gettysburg and the North, after being cut by Stuart. Several operators remained at Gettysburg some time, receiving and transmitting a great number of messages to and from the wounded in hospitals there.

On the morning of the fifth, as it was evident that Lee was retreating, the Sixth Corps began the pursuit, followed the next day by the army to Middletown, where it lost a day awaiting supplies, and then crossing South Mountain and moving *via* Boonsboro, it met the enemy in strong position on the twelfth, when a council of war was held at Meade's head-quarters, where it was voted not to immediately attack Lee's forces which had been unable to cross the Potomac, owing to recent rains and the destruction of pontoons.

As Meade's army moved from Frederick toward Hagerstown and Williamsport, the telegraph was promptly extended to the head-quarters of the General and the Corps Commanders.

These lines were worked continually until after the rebel army had evacuated Williamsport, when the main force of Meade's army moved to Pleasant Valley, Md., the head-quarters of the General being established at Knoxville. Lines were then built to the army, connecting with the Harpers Ferry wire. General French, having evacuated Maryland Heights, was at Frederick City during the battle of Gettysburg, which being decided, General Kenley's command repossessed Harpers Ferry, driving out a few rebels. Operator Moore crossed in the fourth boat, and re-established communication with Washington.

While the battle of Gettysburg was in progress, the President was deeply impressed with the incalculable importance of destroying Lee's army before it could recross the Potomac, and felt the utmost confidence in the ability of Meade's army to accomplish it. On the 8th of July, General Halleck telegraphed Meade :

> There is reliable information that the enemy is crossing at Williamsport. The opportunity to attack his divided forces should not be lost. The President is urgent and anxious that your army should move against him by forced marches.

Meade replied, giving the position and condition of affairs from his standpoint, adding assurances that he would do his utmost to push forward his army, and stating that his information as to the crossing of the enemy did not agree with Halleck's. On the twelfth, Meade telegraphed the position of his own army and that of the enemy as near as he could ascertain, and said, "It is my intention to attack them to-morrow unless something intervenes to prevent it." The President was becoming exceedingly anxious lest the enemy escape without further punishment, and upon the receipt of the above message in the Department telegraph office, where he spent so many of his anxious hours, the President called cipher operator Chandler to a map, on which he traced the various positions occupied by portions of each of the armies; expressed the greatest astonishment that an attack had not been made before; said it seemed to him the rebels were *being driven across* instead of being *prevented* from crossing, and as he walked across the floor said bitterly, "They will be ready to fight a magnificent battle when the enemy are all over the river and there is nobody left to fight."

His fears proved well grounded. Meade called a council of war, as stated, and the next day telegraphed that "five out of six" corps commanders "were unqualifiedly opposed" to attacking the enemy to-day, and consequently Meade did not feel authorized to attack until after he had made a more careful examination of the enemy's position, strength and defensive works. Halleck replied at 9:20 P. M., of the same day (thirteenth):

You are strong enough to defeat the enemy before he can effect a crossing. Act upon your own judgment; make your generals execute your orders; call no council of war. It is proverbial that councils of war never fight. Reinforcements are pushed on as rapidly as possible. Don't let the enemy escape.

Next morning it was discovered that Lee had indeed successfully crossed the river with almost his entire army. Halleck promptly telegraphed the President's disappointment as follows:

I need hardly say to you that the escape of Lee's army without another battle has created great dissatisfaction in the mind of the President, and it will require an active and energetic pursuit on your part to remove the impression that it has not been sufficiently active heretofore.

In consequence of the foregoing expression, Meade immediately asked to be relieved, but his request was not granted. On the fifteenth, the President, in reply to a message from the Hon. Simon Cameron, of Pennsylvania, said:

I would give much to be relieved of the impression that Meade, Couch, Smith and all, since the battle of Gettysburg, have striven only to get the enemy over the river without another fight. Please tell me if you know who was the one corps commander who was for fighting in the council of war on Sunday night.

Meanwhile, as soon as Lee's movement into Pennsylvania had become certain, General Dix, in command at Fortress Monroe, organized a movement for the capture of Richmond, which was undertaken, but proved abortive.

In his report, ending June 30, 1863, Major Eckert said:

It has been my duty to superintend the construction, equipment, operation and management of the Military Telegraph in my department, and to such purpose I have devoted my undivided energy

and attention. It is a matter of congratulation to me, and I trust to the Government, that from the uniform interest manifested by the telegraph employés in their several vocations, and the willingness on their part to undergo privation and hardship that the welfare of the Government and its cause might be served, but little delay in the construction of new military lines, when required, has occurred, and but slight interruption has occasionally existed to the daily operation of the several lines in the department. The general service which the telegraph performs is especially important to the Government and imperative in its character. The successful operation of army movements often depending upon the reliability and promptness of the telegraph and its operators. The amount of Government business transmitted over the military wires has been enormously large, and in its general purport, of the most vital natnre. It is a matter of gratification to me and a merited compliment to my subordinates, to be assured that this vast amount of important labor has been performed to the satisfaction of the honorable Secretary of War and his department.

CHAPTER II.

THE TELEGRAPH IN NORTH CAROLINA, SOUTH CAROLINA, FLORIDA, AND ALONG THE COAST.—THE CORPS' SUCCESSES AND SACRIFICES.

Thus far we have at best merely alluded. to operations against the Confederate seaboard defenses. It is time to make amends, that continuity may not be greatly wanting.

As heretofore shown, Forts Hatteras and Clark, Confederate defenses of Hatteras Inlet to Pamlico Sound, were taken in the summer of 1861. Mention has also been made of the capture in February, 1862, of the forts on Roanoke Island, which were intended to protect Pamlico and Croatan sounds from Union vessels. General Burnside reported "that a combined attack upon this island was commenced on the morning of the seventh by the naval and military forces of this expedition, which has resulted in the capture of six forts, forty guns, over two thousand prisoners and upward of three thousand small arms."

Operators Jules F. Guthridge, George W. Norton and John B. Stough accompanied this expedition, taking telegraphic material for the erection of military lines. Only five miles, however, were constructed, and that was upon Roanoke Island, where the operators remained until Burnside embarked for Fortress Monroe, whence he went to Fredericksburg, to Pope's relief.

We have also shown the capture and occupation of Newberne, Morehead City, Beaufort, Washington, Plymouth and Elizabeth City, N. C., and Norfolk and Suffolk, Va.

October 29, 1861, a grand naval and military expedition, consisting of seventy-seven vessels of all classes, under Commodore DuPont, and twenty thousand men, under General Thomas W. Sherman, sailed from Fort Monroe, to operate against defenses constructed along the South Carolina, Georgia and Florida coasts. Weathering a terrible gale, most of the vessels were able to reach their destination off Port Royal, S. C., situate between Savannah, Ga., and Charleston, S. C., and about fifty miles from

the latter. The principal out-lying islands, which serve as defenses against the sea between Savannah and Charleston, are Cockspur, on which was Fort Pulaski, forty-seven guns, at the mouth of the Savannah River, and commanding its main entrance, and northwardly, in this order, lie Tybee, Hilton Head, St. Helena, Edisto, Kiawah, Folly and Morris. Port Royal Inlet, between Hilton Head and Phillips and St. Helena, opens the interior by many water routes, one of which leads to Savannah, twenty-two miles distant. Forts Walker, twenty-three guns, on Hilton Head, and Beauregard, twenty guns, on Phillips, and their out-works, constituted the defenses of the Port Royal Channel.

November the seventh, Commodore DuPont's fleet of war vessels circled between Forts Walker and Beauregard, subjecting them and Confederate ships of war to a furious cannonade, driving off the latter and capturing the forts. The northernmost point of Tybee Island is sixteen hundred yards from Fort Pulaski. DuPont and Gilmore next turned their attention to Pulaski, operating from Tybee. While Gilmore was arranging his land siege guns, DuPont and Sherman possessed themselves of the Florida coast as far as St. Augustine. April 11, 1863, Pulaski was forced to surrender after sustaining a galling fire from siege guns and war vessels for two days. May 20, the Bay of Stono River was entered by Union gunboats, and Confederate works destroyed. This gave the Federals Kiawah and Folly Islands. North Edisto, to the south of Kiawah and north of St. Helena, had not been seriously defended, and was possessed in February. The lower end of Morris Island was occupied July 10, 1863, after a splendid attack by the combined land and naval forces upon the Confederate works commanding Lighthouse Inlet, between Morris and Folly Islands. At the upper end of Morris, near Cummings' Point, which is sixteen hundred yards from Fort Sumter, in Charleston Harbor, the Confederates had strong earth-works, called Batteries Gregg and Wagner. These islands and other minor ones were famous for the production of "Sea Island Cotton," and under Federal encouragement were populated and cultivated by runaway slaves and stay-at-home negroes; for the owners of island plantations left them entirely on the approach of the "Yankees." Thus the blockade was

rendered quite effectual; safe anchorage obtained for Union vessels in distress; and permanent lodgments effected on the soil of these States.

It will surprise most readers to learn that these outer islands were connected by a land and submarine telegraph, the southernmost end of which was on Tybee Island, and the northern at Battery Gregg on Morris. It was not until after two sanguinary and heroic assaults upon Wagner had failed, and after months of costly, laborious and dangerous service in preparation for a third one, that early in September, 1863, the works were occupied, unopposed; the enemy having evacuated the night previous.

Lemuel F. Sheldon and his brother George D. entered the United States telegraph service about the same time (early in 1862), the former at Fortress Monroe, and the latter at Wheeling, W. Va., afterwards at Martinsburg and General Schenck's headquarters, from which he drifted also to the Fortress, where he became chief operator upon his brother's appointment as assistant to Major Eckert, without rank. Lemuel thereupon proceeded to his new field, reporting to Commodore DuPont and General Sherman in the Department of the South, which and North Carolina were in Eckert's field.

In January, 1863, James R. Gilmore, whose term of enlistment in a volunteer regiment had expired, re-entered the telegraph service at Hagerstown, on special duty, but was soon sent to Fort Monroe. It will be remembered that Gilmore succeeded David Strouse, the first Superintendent in the East, and was himself superseded by Captain Stager. After about three months employment at the Fortress, Gilmore concluded to accompany Sheldon to his new field of labor—the scenes of his brother, the General's splendid military operations.

Sheldon and Gilmore laid a cable across Calibogue Sound (eight miles), from the south end of Hilton Head Island to Tybee, near the Martello Tower; from Tybee across Lazaretto Creek to Cockspur Island, establishing an office in Fort Pulaski. Another cable was laid from the north-west point of Hilton Head Island across Broad River to the south end of Parry's Island, in the Port Royal entrance; also across Beaufort Creek to Beaufort Island, and across Port Royal Creek to St. Helena. These being

connected by land lines, made a circuit from Fort Pulaski to Beaufort City, and thence to the naval depot on St. Helena Island, nearly opposite Hilton Head and across Port Royal Bay. Thus Sherman, on Hilton Head, was in communication with his troops and the naval commander. This was the first Federal military telegraph in South Carolina. Cables and land lines completed the circuit from Fort Pulaski to General Gilmore's new quarters at Cummings' Point, where he was, conjointly with the navy, operating for the reduction of Fort Sumter, in Charleston Harbor. This line was sixty-three and one-half miles long. A. G. Safford operated at Gilmore's head-quarters until February, 1864. Frank H. Lamb was chief operator. J. M. Nye was sent from the War Department office to Fort Pulaski, where he found H. S. Martin. Milton E. Roberts, a detailed soldier who could read the Bain alphabet by sound, but not the Morse, although he could make its characters, worked at Fort Wagner, nearly opposite the enemy's Fort Moultrie, also in the harbor. Roberts was greatly aided by Lamb, who could write Bain, though he could not read it. E. H. McGintey was at Hilton Head, and William Forster at Beaufort. These were, in time, reinforced by J. B. Barry, J. R. Dunlap, D. W. Smith, Ransom Phelps, T. and W. T. McGinty, A. Chamberlain, M. G. Kirkman, M. S. Andrews, A. R. Chamberlain, Paul C. Havens, Alex. K. McMurray, Thos. Roche, F. W. Kingsbury, J. F. McIlvaine, D. N. Bryant, J. J. B. Frey, J. L. Cherry, and L. W. Wortsman, a reformed Confederate, captured near Jacksonville, Fla. But it must not be supposed that all these operators were present at any one time—fourteen being about the average number.

Major Eckert, in an annual report, correctly stated that

> Invaluable service was rendered the army and navy by use of these lines, as, the important posts and stations being situated upon different islands, couriers could not be employed for purposes of communication; consequently, but for the telegraph, great expense would have resulted in the use of steamers for this service.

Nothing, but the importance of the work performed, could have induced the operators to remain on those hot, sandy and largely barren islands, where even the water was unhealthful.

For instance, when Smith went to General Terry's head-quarters on Folly Island, he pursued the usual practice of sinking barrels for water which was very poor at best, but after a few weeks it became intolerable, and while cleaning the well the soldiers discovered a dead man's elbows projecting into it at the bottom edge of the barrel. Then it was recollected that the Charleston authorities had been accustomed to quarantine against small-pox and yellow fever on this and Morris Island. which accounted for the many remains interred there.

The line running across Morris Island, especially between Forts Wagner and Gregg, opposite Sumter, was many times broken down by the enemy's shells. On one occasion, while two repairers were up telegraph poles, a shell struck the intermediate one, shivering it and jerking the repairers from their respective positions to the sand below. McGintey, operating at Battery Gregg, was in an extremely unpleasant place, owing to the bombardment from Sumter, and consequently had to spend much of his time in the bomb-proof. Smith's duties frequently required him to inspect the line along Folly and Morris islands. His horse, an old campaigner, named Gothic on account of his remarkable build, being a strange combination of bone arches and curves, had fixed notions of military proprieties, some of which caused his rider considerable uneasiness. Thus, while under fire from the enemy's guns, no amount of urging could induce Gothic to move faster than a parade canter. If Smith continued to press the beast after that, he would go through a series of exercises on the spot, which showed agility enough, but frightfully misapplied, for there is no mark the cannoneers like to try so well as a man on horseback. Smith's only consolation lay in the pride he took per-force, that others would think him remarkably cool. He ended his service there as too many others did, in sickness caused from malarial exposure. Phelps, his comrade, who served at Beaufort, and the Sanitary Commission people, nursed him from that death which the doctors had said was inevitable.

About the middle of September, 1863, William Forster, a native of New Brunswick, N. S., operating at Beaufort, volunteered to tap the enemy's main line leading from Charleston to Savannah, which of course would prove a very dangerous under-

taking. The Commanding General had considered the matter some time, and as Forster was anxious to undertake the risk, he was sent, although Captain Sheldon refused to order him to go. Forster succeeded in tapping the wire a little west of Pocotaligo. On this errand he was led by runaway negroes, who were familiar with the country, and it is probable that he reached his destination *via* the Combahee River. His pocket instrument was inserted in the circuit by means of fine copper wire covered with silk, which was hidden by moss that grows so beautifully in that country. For two days he listened undisturbed to the passing messages. One of these was an order for a night attack, or else a distinct mention of such an assault, to be made upon General Terry's forces on Folly and Morris islands, for which the troops at Savannah were to concentrate with those at Charleston, and overcome the southern flank of the Union troops on those islands by crossing Folly Creek and suddenly attacking in overwhelming force. General Terry had noticed that the enemy on Johns and James islands, opposite his left, was unusually active, though he could not divine the cause; but when a faithful negro courier brought the telegram which disclosed the plan of operations, all was clear to the General. It is well here to repeat that the Confederates did not resort to their cipher system except rarely. This was especially so in 1863 and might well have been so throughout the war, for their method was not ingenious.

The Union commanders under Terry and Gilmore were at once advised of the intentions of the enemy, who seem to have noticed counter-preparations, for they desisted from the attack. Perhaps the unfortunate capture of Forster, on the third day of his anomalous position, had something to do with the abandonment of the plan. Forster was imprudent enough to walk out to the track, which was very straight for a long distance, and while there he was seen by the engineer of an approaching engine. Probably his hurried retreat excited suspicion. Be that as it may, the engine was stopped at the spot, the wire discovered and a vigorous search made by a company of soldiers. Bloodhounds scoured the woods and neighborhood. Poor Forster was found sunk to his armpits in a swamp. His negro attendants succeeded in escaping, but Forster never saw home

again. He died in Columbia, where he was taken, a few months after.

To make but one special chapter on affairs in the Department of the South, reference will here be made to those in 1864. On the 6th of February, General Seymour, with about five thousand men, embarked for Florida in twenty-eight vessels, occupying Jacksonville the next day. Forty miles advance along the Tallahassee road was made by Seymour's cavalry with excellent results. But the telegraph, which the Confederates used to post themselves as to the progress of the Unionists, was now turned to account in their turn by the latter. Colonel Henry, of the cavalry, having found the enemy too strong in his front, telegraphed General Seymour from near Lake City, and that officer thereupon hurried troops from Sanderson. Operator Lamb started with Seymour to supervise telegraphic affairs, but a kick by a horse at Baldwin Junction caused his return, leaving Milton E. Roberts chief at the front, and J. M. Nye at Jacksonville. On the advance from Jacksonville to Baldwin, a telegraph operator was captured at his station, and under the influence of a revolver at his ear, compelled to telegraph in his own style (for most operators have peculiarities of manipulation), a train order which in due time brought a complete train into the Union lines, where it was of course captured. Contrary to Gilmore's directions, Seymour pushed on and was whipped in the battle of Olustee near Lake City, losing about two hundred and fifty killed and one thousand, two hundred and fifty wounded, while half those numbers would cover the enemy's loss. It is said that Gilmore, by signal from the mouth of St. John's River to Jacksonville and thence by telegraph, warned Seymour of his danger. Gilmore also sent a staff officer to Jacksonville with orders, but it was too late, and Seymour, on their receipt, replied, "We have met the enemy and are retreating; a devilish hard rub." The telegraph was of great service on this trip and probably hundreds of Union messages passed over this No. 8 English wire, which was taken down on the retreat and used along the coast.

Work for the reduction of the defenses of Charleston continued. Gilmore's shells, after traveling four miles, fell into the city, doing

no little damage, and as to the great fort itself, it crumbled under a steady fire, but the stars and bars continued to wave as proudly as when first planted upon its solid ramparts. Sailors attempted to scale its walls, and suffered great loss for the few engaged.

The Confederates also relied on the telegraph. Beauregard had here caused, perhaps, the only strictly military telegraph in the Confederacy, to be erected, from Fort Sumter to Battery Bee, *via* James Island to the south, Charleston to the west, and the battery on Sullivan's Island on the north. An original and interesting character, named G. W. McCann, worked at Sumter. J. W. Kates, the first, and W. R. Cathcart, the last Superintendent, had an office in the city, where William Bryan was operator, and on Sullivan's Island was another, named —— Peacock. Thus were the troops and forts united by lines of telegraph.

Among the many projects for blowing up Sumter was one which occupied the attention of Captain Sheldon and operator A. G. Safford. While General Foster was in command (July, 1864), he asked Sheldon if he could explode powder by electricity through submerged wires, and if so, to arrange to blow up Sumter. Sheldon possessed some field cable, turned over by the Signal Corps, which he tested, and reported that it would stand submersion successfully for twelve hours. He then procured a large number of tin canteens, and had them made air-tight, to use as floats to his cable. Ten miles of cable on one reel, and five of manilla rope on another, were arranged to pay out equally. The rope was attached to a scow containing ten barrels of powder. The two ends of the cable were placed in a barrel of the powder, fixed on a piece of coke with platinas half an inch apart. The other ends of the cable went to a battery on deck of a monitor. The project was to float the scow with the flood tide against Sumter, and when in position, a signal from Morris Island was to indicate that the proper time had come, and Fort Sumter was to disappear forever. The whole arrangement was satisfactory after practical tests, and at eleven A. M., on the day agreed upon, the monitor stood inside the Charleston Bar, but the storm then brewing grew harder and fiercer until the sea ran over the deck. At seven, P. M., the storm still prevailing, the Admiral notified the Captain of a postponement. That was the last the navy had to do with the affair. An explosion from the shore

subsequently took place, but beyond eliciting a lively response from thirty or forty guns, produced no effect.

After Mr. Gilmore had assisted Sheldon in laying the Port Royal Inlet cable, the latter, whose territory also included North Carolina, sent him (June, 1863) to Newberne, in that State, to erect and personally superintend lines in that district, then commanded by General Palmer. The offices to be opened on this line were Morehead City, Newport Barracks, Newberne and Bachelor's Creek. This line, forty-two miles long, was built in a substantial manner, fully equipped, and in operation in one week from the date at which Gilmore arrived in Newberne with his six builders. John Lock was, at that time, Gilmore's only operator, but Charles H. Lithgow, Herman Waterhouse, Douglass Kent, Robt. B. Vanderhoof, D. C. McGaughey and B F. Gilmore arrived in good time. Of this line, Major Eckert reported :

> In the District of North Carolina, forty-two miles of line have been operated during the fiscal year, under the direction of James R. Gilmore. * * * Great credit is due Captain Gilmore, [before this report was made, he was commissioned Captain—AUTHOR], for his management whilst in North Carolina. Offices were kept open in Newberne, Morehead City, Beaufort, Newport Barracks and Bachelor's Creek. By this means, General Palmer, commanding the district, was kept in telegraphic communication day and night with four of the most important military posts in his district, and incalculable service has been furnished the Government. Besides this the navy has been assisted very greatly in its operations by having telegraphic communication between the blockading fleet off the coast, and the squadron in the Sounds.

General Foster succeeded to the command of the Department of North Carolina, but Burnside having withdrawn so many troops, Foster could not act aggressively to any considerable extent. After Foster took twelve thousand troops to the South Carolina coast, it was still more certain that advances were hardly to be counted on from that quarter.

On the 1st of February, General Pickett, commanding the Confederates in North Carolina, appeared at Bachelor's Creek, where D. C. McGaughey was operator. Pickett was intent on

retaking Newberne. He might have made better progress, had he captured McGaughey, for he was an invaluable man; always ready, day or night, for any service, whether in the office or out on the line. He accompanied every scouting expedition and was several times selected by the Commanding General, to carry despatches which it was deemed unsafe to entrust to ordinary couriers. He rode like a Comanche, and was happiest in the performance of extra-hazardous service. In short, he was an emergency man. While Pickett was approaching Newberne, McGaughey was stationed about ten miles out with a cavalry, escort, to give warning of the enemy's approach in that direction. He was furnished a pocket instrument, and provided himself at a farmer's house with a double-barreled shot-gun. At midnight, his escort deserted him, retiring to Newberne. But though alone, McGaughey would not quit his post until three, A.M., and then only because the enemy had cut the line between him and that place. He made his way on foot through the rebel forces, and reached Newberne safely at daylight. Pickett was afraid to assault the defenses with vigor, and nothing further was attempted until April, when Plymouth was captured after a splendid defense by General Wessell's force of twenty-four hundred men, who were killed, wounded or captured. There was no telegraph there. In his report of affairs about Newberne, General Palmer wrote as follows:

HEAD-QUARTERS ARMY AND DISTRICT OF NORTH CAROLINA,
Newberne, N. C., February 17, 1864.

MAJOR GENERAL B. F. BUTLER,
Commanding Department of Virginia
and North Carolina, Fortress Monroe:

GENERAL: * * * * * *

Extract.—At no time, I suspect, during the present war, has the utility of the Military Telegraph and the Signal Corps been more fully demonstrated, than during the late attack. The attack had scarcely commenced at the out-posts, when the telegraph had not only informed me of all that was going on in front, but the whole line of posts to Morehead was put upon its guard, and during the day when the enemy were immediately around the town, the Signal

Corps kept us advised of the smallest movement of the enemy at any point of the line. I can not think too highly of these two corps.

* * * * * * *

J. N. PALMER, *Brig. Gen.*,
Comdg. A. and D. of N. C.

In forwarding a copy of the above to Washington, Mr. Gilmore added: "On two like occasions since then, our line has done work the value of which to the Government, General Palmer says, 'can not be estimated in money.'"

Exposure on a raid against the Weldon Railroad compelled Gilmore to go north to recruit. No sooner had he returned with his brother, another operator, than the yellow fever broke out in the district, and three of the operators were stricken, poor McGaughey first. Herman Frank Waterhouse was convalescing in the hospital at Newport Barracks, where he had suffered from bilious fever, when, hearing of McGaughey's sufferings, he volunteered to nurse him. Thus Waterhouse took the dread disease. McGaughey, Waterhouse, and Douglas Kent another operator, fell victims of the scourge, and on the pay-rolls, which alone indicate that these men were in the service of their country, is written opposite their respective names the simple word, "Discharged." An eternal discharge, indeed; but who would suspect from that word the honorable service rendered. *Yet that is the only thank ever vouchsafed Union operators, living, or dead, for their services, sufferings and sacrifices.*

In response to repeated requests for men to take the places of these "discharged" ones, Mr. Gilmore was ordered by Major Eckert to close the lines and protect himself and men as best he could, as he did not consider that the exigencies of the service required additional sacrifices.

JAMES R. GILMORE was on the third day of November, 1864, commissioned captain and assistant quarter-master, and the next month relieved Captain Sheldon at the latter's request. We have heretofore had many personal glimpses at Mr. Gilmore's career, which was one of marked devotion to the cause, whether recruiting or serving as a private soldier, operator or officer. Wherever he went, his presence was manifested by an unflagging zeal and determined purpose. Whether conducting the

first telegraph at Fortress Monroe, building a line from Washington to Banks' lost army, ferreting out treasonable schemes, aiding on the hot sands of the Southern coast, conducting telegraphic affairs in North and South Carolina, or, as will appear later, restoring the lines in several Atlantic States, he was equally indefatigable and successful

JAMES R. GILMORE.

When relieved of the management of the telegraphs in the Department of the Potomac by Captain Stager, late in 1861, he assisted in organizing Company A, One Hundred and Twenty-sixth Pennsylvania volunteers, with which he served in the battles of the second Bull Run, Antietam and Fredericksburg, but since the war he has been in the National Engineer Department, constructing fortifications in New York harbor and on the South Atlantic coast, besides improving rivers and harbors in South Carolina, Georgia and Florida.

CHAPTER III.

THE TELEGRAPH IN THE DEPARTMENT OF THE GULF.—PORT HUDSON, RED RIVER, AND OTHER CAMPAIGNS.

Very little occurred in this department of noteworthy consequence, in a telegraphic point of view, until after the coming of Charles S. Bulkley, who was commissioned captain, assistant quarter-master and superintendent of military telegraphs in January, 1863. Indeed, no military or naval warfare took place here until about the last of April, 1862. Admiral Farragut, with the largest naval force that up to that time had ever sailed under the flag of the Union, after expending in his five days' bombardment of Forts Jackson and St. Phillips, river defenses of New Orleans, five thousand, five hundred and thirty-two shells, on the night of the 24th of April passed the forts with most of his fleet, under a terribly galling fire, and after silencing shore batteries and capturing and destroying numerous armed vessels, appeared before the city on the twenty-fifth. General Butler, with less than fifteen thousand men in the department, occupied the place about May 1st.

There was a private *ante bellum* telegraph line connecting at least the Head of the Passes of the Delta with the forts and New Orleans. This line belonged to the Good Intent Tow-boat Company of New Orleans, and was the medium by which, during the bombardment, the citizens were kept posted as to its progress, but about two hundred of Butler's men, avoiding the forts by indirection, fell upon this line shortly after the fleet had mainly run the gantlet, and cutting the wire left the city in a gloom of suspense.

The troops in one of the forts mutinied, and the surrender of both speedily followed. Farragut soon moved up the river and bombarded Vicksburg. He even ran its batteries and joined the Federals above. An unsuccessful expedition ventured up the Yazoo in July. In August, the Unionists (nine regiments), under General Williams, who was killed at the moment of vic-

tory, were attacked by General Breckenridge's forces (thirteen regiments) at Baton Rouge. Federal and Confederate gunboats played a small part in this affair, and the rebel ram "Arkansas" was disabled and destroyed.

No adequate arrangements had been made for telegraphic advantages when General Butler entered New Orleans. Fred J. Grace, an expert telegrapher, accompanied Farragut, even in running the forts, and Lieutenant I. Elliot Smith, who served as superintendent of Butler's telegraphs, was doubtless an operator, and it may have been these operators for whom Butler sent to the fleet almost as soon as he entered the city. We are not aware of any report that shows what was done by telegraphers under Butler. E. Von Eye, who was detailed as a messenger in the city office, September 2, 1862, has, however, informed us that the operators were detailed from the ranks and had to learn the art, as none could be had who were proficient; most of them did very well. They were taken from Vermont, New Hampshire and Connecticut regiments. The lines extended north-west *via* Carrolton and Camp Parapet to Pass Manchac bridge; north, a little east, *via* Fort Macomb to Fort Pike; the Balize line *via* Algiers, Quarantine, the forts, Head of the Passes, South-west Pass, and later to Point La Hoche and Pass á l'Outre; west, to La Fourche crossing, Boutte and Bayou des Allemands. These lines, except that down the river, were extended from time to time, as we shall see. Captain Bulkley brought a number of operators with him, and yet others soon followed. Among these were Edward Conway from the Potomac, W. A. Sheldon, late captain of a cavalry company, S. B. Fairchild, formerly manager of New Haven, Connecticut, office, B. B. Glass from Department of the Missouri, S. L. Griffin, J. J. Wilkie, —— Pitfield, —— Foster, David Elphick and Henry Stouder.

December 16, General N. P. Banks succeeded Butler in the department, which then included Texas. Banks' forces (Nineteenth Army Corps), about thirty thousand, were expected to aid in opening the Mississippi and Red rivers and to restore Texas. Baton Rouge was reoccupied late in December by ten thousand Federals, and the telegraph erected thereto *via* Bonnet, Carre and Donaldsonville. Banks' first expedition of moment to meet the enemy was a joint land (under Weitzel) and naval

(under Commodore Buchanan) move up the Teche Bayou. January 14, 1863, quite an affair occurred at Carney's bridge near Pattersonville, in which Buchanan lost his life while engaged with two rebel gunboats, which, during the engagement, were sunk near other obstructions. The infantry drove off over eleven hundred Confederates, Weitzel's force being forty-five hundred; but the bayou was impassable and Superintendent Bulkley was commissioned to open the channel He subsequently reported his operations, as follows, to Colonel Stager:

I have the honor to report in regard to the operations in Bayou Teche, that I was ordered by Major General Banks, to proceed up the above named bayou, with the necessary apparatus and with the aid of a colored regiment in the engineer service, to remove the obstructions, consisting of two sunken vessels filled with brick, secured by piles driven around them, and the iron-clad gunboats Cotton and Hart, making in all four barriers completely closing the bayou. The water being shallow and the vessels imbedded in the muddy bottom, it was impossible to operate with powder inside their hulls, owing to the slight resistance the shallow water would give us above the charge, nor could the charges be successfully placed beneath them, with the means at my disposal. The only course left was to place them as low as possible alongside the hulls. The first charge of eighty pounds was exploded near the bow of one of the vessels filled with brick, which moved her bodily twenty feet, tearing down the piles and discharging parts of her brick cargo. With twenty-five-pound charges, she was then broken up and hauled to the banks. Vessel number two was removed in the same manner, but with less powder, not being so thoroughly filled with brick. The gunboat Cotton was found loaded with her heavy machinery. Rather than risk the chances of dropping this in the bayou, we removed her stern only. In this case, one charge of eighty pounds was used inside her hull with great effect, considering the shallow water—only six feet in depth. Small charges of twenty-five pounds alongside the fragments completed the removal.

The gunboat Hart also had her machinery on board, and three large boilers, which were under water, securely bolted to her hull and connected with large boiler-iron pipes. We succeeded in placing a charge of fifty pounds under them, near the farther end from shore. By this explosion they were torn from their fastenings, and landed near the bank of the bayou, besides shattering the hull.

Our next charge of four hundred pounds was placed alongside, directly amidship, in water nine feet in depth. This removed her center from side to side completely, and her ends were readily hauled near the bank. This cleared the bayou and rendered it navigable for our steamboat transportation. In removing these, we expended seven hundred and fifty pounds of powder and used three cups of Grove battery to ignite the charges. Our conducting wires were two thousand feet in length—the electric current passing from this over a small platina wire fixed in a cartridge in the case containing the charge. This conducting wire is part of a lot captured in New Orleans, of Confederate manufacture, rather imperfect, and intended for exploding torpedoes in the Mississippi River In compliance with the order of Major General Banks, the United States Military Telegraph Department has furnished the necessary apparatus, material and superintendence for this work. The colored regiment, Colonel Robinson commanding, rendered the most willing and efficient aid.

In February, the Union ram Queen of the West and gunboat DeSoto were captured up Red River. The Confederate ram Webb, the Queen of the West and other war vessels then attacked the Indianola, one of the best river boats, capturing it. Thus the Confederates obtained control of the Mississippi between Vicksburg and New Orleans, besides a number of navigable tributaries. Farragut having again passed Vicksburg, co-operated with Banks to regain control. Banks advanced against Port Hudson with twelve thousand men, while it was defended by sixteen thousand. Farragut ran its batteries about the middle of March with some vessels, losing one and others being disabled, wherupon Banks returned to Baton Rouge.

The telegraphers had followed him with the line, and of course took it down on his retirement. Banks again moved westward from New Orleans. This was early in April. His forces being divided, a part fought near Fort Bisland, after which Confederate General Richard Taylor retired to Opelousas. The Queen of the West was also destroyed in Grand Lake. Taylor, driven from Opelousas and Alexandria, retired with a remnant of his troops to Grand Ecore and Shreveport. Lines were extended along the railroad from Brashier City up the

river immediately in the rear of Banks, and offices opened at intermediate points.

Having scattered the enemy's forces in this section, Banks now hoped to reduce Port Hudson and join Grant in besieging Vicksburg, or at least to hold the garrison at Port Hudson until Grant could capture Vicksburg and assist him. Accordingly, he marched across the country, and, joined by Augur's division from below, invested Port Hudson, May 25, making a very unsuccessful but heroic assault two days later. The telegraph was quickly opened at Banks' head-quarters, where Ed. Conway was manager. Siege lines were built from Springfield Landing along the fronts of Generals T. W. Sherman's, Augur's, Paine's, Grover's and Weitzel's troops, and offices opened at the officer's head-quarters. This line was fourteen miles long.

During the siege of this stronghold, the Union wires were lengthened, and offices advanced towards the enemy's works, whenever the Federal forces moved forward. It was pending one of these changes that operator B. B. Glass was sent from General Augur's to the extreme left, to open a new office. This was probably during the fierce assault of June 14. The supply of field wire failed about a quarter of a mile from the point to which he was sent, and as his orders were to follow the wire, he reached the end of it, when, expecting it to be immediately extended, he took his direction from the troops, but soon emerged from the woods to find himself almost on the line of battle, a short distance from the enemy's works. Glass, who was mounted, had to pass an open space of about three hundred yards, to reach shelter from the storm of bullets, shot and shell. He tried the Indian dodge of hugging the safe side of his horse. As that was a new trick under trying circumstances, he nearly tumbled, but hanging by the pommel with one hand, and the mane with the other, he managed to keep one limb free. The spur on the boot of that one was dextrously plied. The soldiers along the route found rare sport in the operator's equestrian tactics and many were their remarks, which all seemed to appreciate but poor Glass, at whom they were directed. In this dash the horse received two slight flesh wounds. Soon after, Glass's office was opened, for lack of wire, uncomfortably near the enemy and just behind an Indiana battery. Consequently, the

operator oftentimes lay very flat in a three-foot ditch, while his instrument was on a cracker box within hearing. After awhile, Glass arranged a crude *bomb-proof* (?) out of rails and *débris*, which, fortunately, was not struck. At this office he staid night and day, dodging shells by day and fighting gallinippers by night. We believe that S. L. Griffin and W. A. Tinker, operators, also worked on this siege line.

About 3:30 A. M., July 6, Glass received despatches for Banks from General Grant and Commodore Porter, announcing the surrender of Vicksburg; but Conway at Banks' had fallen asleep from exhaustion, and the messages were sent by orderly. Two days after, the originals were forwarded to Confederate General Gardner, as proof of the facts stated, and on the ninth, he surrendered six thousand, four hundred and eight men, fifty-one pieces of artillery, two steamers and much other valuable property.

Once more the Mississippi River, under Federal control, ran "unvexed to the sea." Glass, who was among the first to enter Port Hudson, secured as a trophy General Gardner's head-quarters flag, made with cross-bars on a red field, and blue stars on the bars, which he retains to this day.

During the siege of Port Hudson, the line to New Orleans was cut one afternoon, north of Bonnet Carre, and the officer commanding the guard there, whose duty it was to patrol the line for about twenty miles every day, telegraphed General Emory, in New Orleans, that two hundred guerrillas were reported just below Donaldsonville, and had torn down the wire. The message ended with a request for permission to withdraw the guard into the works at Bonnet Carre, and being authorized so to do, he soon reported his command safely within the works. W. A. Sheldon, manager of the city office, and Department chief operator, had had much experience as a cavalry officer, and doubting the report, obtained an order from Emory to take command of the patrol, about one hundred strong, and, if possible, restore communication with Banks. The officer in command pleaded indisposition, but thought if he could ride up on a *gun-boat*, he could take command in case of a fight, if landed in time. This novel *horse-marine* idea the Captain was left to develop while Sheldon and the troopers hurried off. About fifteen miles

distant, a large party was seen coming toward them. Sheldon took them for guerrillas, but they were soon proven to be passengers, who the evening before, had left New Orleans on the same steamer that landed Sheldon. This steamboat had been fired into a few miles below Donaldsonville by a battery on the opposite side of the river, striking the steampipe, whereupon the steamer was run to the east side and the passengers landed. A gunboat soon after drove off the battery and saved the steamer. Sheldon discovered a quarter of a mile of wire missing, near Donaldsonville, which an old negro reported to have been cut by an overseer, who threw it into the river. Of course the line was restored, and the overseer imprisoned.

It was a cruel necessity that compelled Banks to abandon Alexandria and the Red River country to besiege Port Hudson, and many are the sad stories of misery and worse inflicted on Unionists, particularly negroes, who were left to the enemy. General Taylor, thereupon, being reinforced, swept away or captured all the outposts west of Algiers, Louisiana. In this advance, many Federal prisoners were taken and millions of dollars worth of property captured or destroyed. While Colonel Stickney was gallantly defending La Fourche crossing, repulsing two attacks late in June, 1863, a shell exploded on the roof of the telegraph office, where the operator was telegraphing to New Orleans an account of the progress of the fight. Stickney retired to Algiers. Taylor could not cross the river and therefore moved north, his advance being repulsed at Donaldsonville, with a loss of three hundred and twenty-four killed, wounded and missing, which was off-set, a few days later, by a defeat of Federals six miles inland. This occurred shortly after the fall of Port Hudson, and Taylor fled westward.

During the siege of Port Hudson and Taylor's operations, the operators throughout the department became greatly exhausted from long vigilance. In only one office was there more than one operator, and that was New Orleans, the focal point in the department, where Sheldon was zealously assisted by Henry Stouder, at that time a very ordinary operator. While General Taylor was operating against Fort Butler and Brashier City, Sheldon, about midnight, granted permission to the operators at La Fourche, Baton Rouge and Donaldsonville to retire until six

A. M., as they had been on continuous duty for two days and nights. Sheldon, himself, also went to sleep. An hour later he was awakened by heavy knocking of two young aides of Emory's, one of whom in a gruff voice ordered him to get up and send a message at once. Sheldon protested that the operator at the other end was asleep and the message could not be sent. Angry words followed and a guard was placed at Sheldon's door and he held a prisoner. But when General Emory heard of the affair, he roundly berated the officers for their conduct. This instance recalls the fact that in the preceding May, while Banks and Captain Bulkley were away from New Orleans, General T. W. Sherman, in command, placed one of his officers in charge of the telegraphs, whereupon the two city operators rebelled, and being threatened with imprisonment, resigned, and refused to reconsider their resignations on Bulkley's return to remedy matters.

Immediately after the capture of Port Hudson, Banks sent a steamer up to Vicksburg after additional telegraphers, and returned with William Foley, G. W. Baxter, E. H. Johnson and H. W. Nichols. Baxter and Foley stopped at Port Hudson just in time to serve operator Griffin a good turn. It was during the summer of 1863, General Herron sent an orderly late at night with a telegram for New Orleans. Tinker, the night operator, sent word that the line was down and the message could not be sent until it was repaired. The next morning, General Andrews, post commandant, sent for Griffin, the manager, who appeared in the absence of that officer, and having returned, was escorted back by a file of soldiers, because he declined to close his office and go again. Griffin was put in the guard-house, but soon released, as Baxter and Foley refused to work unless he was set at liberty.

After Port Hudson, General Franklin operated unsuccessfully, in conjunction with the navy, along the coast of Texas, and as a diversion, General C. C. Washburn was sent up the New Orleans, Opelousas & Great Western Railroad as far as Opelousas; but on retiring was beaten by Taylor and Green, losing seven hundred and sixteen killed, wounded and missing. In October and November, Banks conducted operations which

gave the Unionists control of all the coast from the Rio Grande to the Brazos, even penetrating far inland.

W. A. Sheldon having been attacked by fever shortly after the capture of Port Hudson, Sidney B. Fairchild became department chief operator and Ed Conway, manager of lines. These were extended to Morganzia, where A. W. O'Neil operated. On General Banks' attempting his Red River Campaign in March, the telegraph was advanced to the mouth of the Red River. In doing this, Bulkley's men were constantly annoyed by small parties of cavalry, some of whom were captured by Bulkley's command, but he reports that they killed two of his men in one of their attacks. This line to New Orleans was interrupted so much by the enemy, but mainly by bushwhackers, that between Baton Rougè and Port Hudson it was changed to the west bank. General Banks then ordered that whenever the wire was molested, every house or habitable domicile within, it is said (but we doubt it), twenty miles of the injury, should be destroyed, and in one instance houses were burned, pursuant to the order. After that the line was unmolested.

March 13, Banks' army (seventeen thousand) about Franklin started for Alexandria, on the Red River, where it met A. J. Smith's troops (ten thousand) which had gone up the river convoyed by Admiral Porter's fleet, and about the same time General Steele left Little Rock with fifteen thousand troops. These forces, co-operating, were expected to destroy the Confederate armies under Dick Taylor and Kirby Smith, and to converge about Shreveport. Edward Conway accompanied Banks' army, in charge of the field telegraph, by which it was expected to maintain immediate communication with the different parts of the army during battle. Some disagreement occurring between Bulkley and Conway, the latter resigned, and Fairchild was placed in charge. The other operators were W. H. Munro, Wm. Foley, Horace W. Nichols. The telegraph train consisted of five wagons, three of which were laden with wire on reels, and were drawn each by four-mule teams. At New Iberia, Conway rejoined and took charge as before. Banks severed his telegraphic connection with New Orleans, at a point seven miles north-west of New Iberia, March 15, when the following, the last message vouchsafed an anxious world before plunging deeply

into the wilds, morasses and dangers of North-west Louisiana, was sent

To Captain Bulkley, New Orleans:

Head-quarters in the saddle for the last two days. Hind-quarters sore. (Signed) S. B. F.

At one time the telegraph party lay asleep in tents, having had no notice that the army would move early, and was consequently actually left so far behind that bushwhackers came up and fired upon them, one ball striking a tent pole; but fortunately Banks had asked for his cipher operator, Conway, when it was discovered that the party was not up with the army. The Second New York Cavalry was sent to their rescue, arriving just in time to drive off the guerrillas. At Vermillion, Foley and Fairchild were sent spinning down a hill by a careless driver, the reels following after them and imparting a kind of real life, which, to be enjoyed, "needs but to be *seen*."

At Alexandria, the operators boarded the steamer Laurel Hill, for Grand Ecore, where teams and all arrived on the 5th of April, and the next day, Fairchild, Munro and Foley, having obtained permission, started to visit Natchitoches, four miles distant and beyond the Union lines. At the edge of the town, after passing through a grove, Munro, who was familiar with the people, discovered that his party was followed by guerrillas. These fired upon the operators, whereupon they returned rapidly to camp, and, owing to their report, Natchitoches was occupied.

April 8, the advance, at Sabine Cross Roads, was violently assaulted and badly beaten. At Pleasant Grove, three miles in the rear, on the same day, Emory's division barely saved the army and, consequently, the vessels in the river. The next day, Banks was again attacked at Pleasant Hill, fifteen miles further back, where the Confederate charges were repulsed with great loss. In these conflicts the enemy numbered about twenty-two thousand. Banks was unable to concentrate, at any one time, over fifteen thousand men, and that number only at Pleasant Hill. His loss in these battles was three thousand, nine hundred and sixty nine, of whom about half were taken prisoners.

General Steele's advance had not reached supporting distance. At Grand Ecore, Banks heard from him by a cipher message

brought across the country. Fairchild labored long upon it, as it was erroneously made up, but finally succeeded in translating it.

Banks' expedition, owing to numerous causes, but especially the defeat on the eighth, and the falling water in the river, had become a positive failure, and the great problem now was to reach the Mississippi with troops and flotilla. Conway left Grand Ecore, May 20, with Admiral Porter, on the tin-clad "Cricket," taking batteries and other electrical apparatus for use in blowing up gunboats in case they failed to pass over the falls near Alexandria; but he lost all his apparatus with the boat itself, which was literally riddled with shells and balls, above Alexandria, whereby half of her crew were killed and wounded. It is written "that there was scarcely any of her left." After many conflicts great and small, between the Union soldiers, the navy, and the Confederates, the former reached Simmsport, May 16, and Porter's fleet of fifty vessels, less a few gunboats and transports lost, arrived at the mouth of the Red River, after a harassing retreat, which has few parallels. Banks' campaign losses exceeded five thousand, and the enemy's was probably about the same.

The operators shared the hardships, privations and dangers of the undertaking. Captain Bulkley officially commended Conway for "efficiency and creditable conduct throughout and during the campaign." When Banks had reached Alexandria, he found reinforcements, from the Texan coast, which had been mainly abandoned in April.

During that month, Bulkley built a military line from Brazos to Brownsville, which was the first Federal military line ever erected in Texas.

On the 6th of May, at midnight, Colonel Stager was ordered by Secretary Stanton, to meet and proceed with General E. R. S. Canby (who was about to relieve Banks) to Cairo, Ill., to arrange "for prompt transmission and receipt of intelligence between that point and the forces on Red River." Stager promptly executed this order, and received soon after Stanton's commendation, as follow: "Accept my thanks for your prompt and energetic action."

Canby became Department Commander on the 20th of May, 1864, and Bulkley, at his own suggestion, was relieved about

August 1, to take a prominent part in the erection of an international telegraph line, *via* Behring's Straits. Stager endorsed Bulkley's resignation, as follows:

Captain Bulkley has served for nearly two years as Assistant Superintendent of the United States Military Telegraph with great zeal and ability, and the successful management of military telegraphs in the Department of the Gulf has secured him highest testimonials of Generals commanding in that Department.

During the first six months of 1863, two hundred and forty-four miles of telegraph, connecting Bonnet Carre, Franklin and New Iberia, were constructed by the Military Telegraph Corps, and two hundred and four miles of telegraph were erected within this Department, from July 1, 1863, to June 30, 1864, at which latter time the total force—operators, linemen, messengers and teamsters—was but ninety-six, to work over thirty offices. The number of military telegrams sent during the year was one hundred and forty thousand.

Although Steele's movement from Little Rock was co-operative, as stated, it, too, was unsuccessful. Probably Theodore Holt accompanied Steele, as cipherer, but there was no telegraph train. Captain Clowry, Superintendent of Telegraphs in Missouri and Arkansas, reported that,

On March 14, 1864, General Steele started south with his army to co-operate with General Banks on Red River, leaving but a very small force on the line of the Arkansas River. The telegraph line to Fort Smith did not work after the army withdrew south. The guerrillas became so numerous that it was impossible to keep it working west of Lewisburg. Three of my men, Alexander Kane, Jacob Richard and Thomas Jones, were killed by guerrillas while repairing the line near Clarksville. Their bodies were horribly mutilated before life was extinct. Their escort had camped and were surprised, but they all got away, leaving my men behind with a wagon and five horses. The escort was from the First Arkansas cavalry. I continued to send repairers out, but the line was cut as fast as fixed up, so I discontinued all efforts to keep the line up west of Lewisburg, in March, 1864.

April 20, we received news of Steele's occupation of Camden, he having made a demonstration on Washington. The rebels evac-

uated Camden and he, by forced marches, got in their rear and occupied it. Camden was thoroughly fortified and navigation opened on the Ouachita, on which river it is located; but no boats came to General Steele's succor. After the defeat of General Banks, the rebels fell on Steele in great numbers, capturing his supply trains and forcing him to evacuate Camden, which he did successfully, marching toward Little Rock, closely pursued by the enemy, who overtook him on the south side of the Saline River with fifteen thousand men, Kirby Smith in command. Steele repulsed them severely, capturing three pieces of artillery, two of which were taken by the Second Kansas colored troops. General Solomon's division did most of the fighting, Brigadier General Rice's brigade bearing the brunt of the battle. Rice was wounded and has since died from its effects. On April 30, General Steele's army reached Little Rock.

During May and June, I had great difficulty in keeping the lines up to DuVall's Bluff, Pine Bluff and Lewisburg, but managed to do so by keeping men and teams out constantly with escorts.

From the temporary abandonment of the Fort Smith line until late in the fall of 1864, the situation of the troops at the fort under General Thayer, and of the telegraph party, consisting of W. H. Woodring and J. L. Sears, operators, and James Lane and J. K. Bear, repairers, was quite critical at times, as the enemy concentrated in considerable force in that vicinity and attacked outlying posts. In August, Thayer was so apprehensive that he caused Woodring to put in cipher a message for Steele, advising the latter of the situation. This report was given to two soldiers, dressed as citizens. Avoiding the highways as much as possible by day, they started on their perilous errand. *En route*, they fell in with a citizen, and, from motives of policy, became quite as violent in their expressions of Secession sentiments as he. They remarked upon the condition of the telegraph to this stranger, who had become quite communicative, and he boastingly mentioned the part he had taken in killing the three repairers, Kane, Richard and Jones, who, as we have seen, were most brutally murdered. Not content with their death, the captors cruelly tore out Kane's eyes while yet alive, and otherwise foully dealt with him and the other two. These facts the trusty soldiers well knew, and no sooner had the

guerrilla revealed his complicity than they bound him and hung him to a pole with a piece of broken wire, and there left him with a card pinned to his coat, showing why he was hung.

VanBuren office, distant four miles from Fort Smith, was operated during these times by Joseph Hansen, a brave ex-soldier, who had fought in several engagements, to be captured at last by a pair of beautiful eyes that grew in that vicinity. It was his last engagement; since which time he has been out on his parole of honor.

CHAPTER IV.

THE TELEGRAPH IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF THE CUMBERLAND AND OHIO.—RAIDS IN KENTUCKY.—OHIO INVADED.—MIDDLE AND EASTERN TENNESSEE OCCUPIED BY FEDERALS.—CHICKAMAUGA.—MISSIONARY RIDGE.—DEFENSE OF KNOXVILLE.

In the Department of the Cumberland, after the battle of Stone River and before another campaign was initiated, as usually happens when large opposing armies long confront one another, raiding expeditions were freely indulged in; thus, on the part of the Federals, a foraging command, under Colonel John Coburn, numbering nearly three thousand men, moved out of Franklin, Tenn., March 4, 1863, fighting most of its way to near Spring Hill, where it was opposed by Generals VanDorn and Wheeler. After a loss of about two hundred killed or wounded, Coburn and three regiments were captured. On the eighteenth, Colonel A. S. Hall advanced from Murfreesboro, to intercept General John H. Morgan's command, resulting in a fight of several hours at Milton, when Morgan retreated, leaving four hundred men on the field to fall into Federal hands. Less than two weeks after, General D. S. Stanley drove Morgan to McMinnville, inflicting considerable loss.

In April, Colonel A. D. Streight moved up the Tennessee to Eastport, to operate in conjunction with General Dodge from Corinth, upon the enemy's communications, stores and foundries in Northern Alabama and Georgia, but he seems, strangely enough, to have omitted taking an operator with him. Having separated from Dodge, after a running fight of several days, he surrendered to General Forrest his command of seventeen hundred men, then in the neighborhood of Rome, Ga. Expeditions under Generals Reynolds and Stanley, and Colonel Watkins and others, resulted advantageously to the Unionists.

On the part of the Confederates, late in January, Wheeler, Forrest and Wharton, passing through Rosecrans' army, *via*

Triune, and escaping the Federal cavalry and infantry with a loss of three hundred and fifty men, attempted, on the 3d of February, the capture of Fort Donelson, defended by the Eighty-third Illinois—Colonel A. C. Harding—which beat off the enemy's repeated assaults, with, it is said, the enormous loss to the assailants of eight hundred killed or wounded and one hundred captured; being a total of two hundred more than were defending the fort. The Union loss was eighty-three killed, wounded and missing. Peter Fowler or Wm. A. Thayer operated there at that time. Operator J. A. Fuller chanced to be on a steamer, about this time, which Wheeler captured at the shoals near by. Until Chaplain Gaddis, also on board, prevailed on Wheeler to let the boat go, Fuller, who took to his bed when the boat was over-hauled, was to all intents and purposes sick unto death—*in extremis*—but as soon as he heard of Gaddis' success, he was as healthy as any. The ruse was a good one, for it saved him from being paroled.

He went immediately to Brentwood, Tenn., nine miles from Nashville, where, on the 25th of March, he was awakened early by a negro who told him that Forrest was coming, and the Yankees were fixing for a fight. Fuller immediately telegraphed the facts to Nashville, and while the skirmishers were deploying, threw his instrument under the house and started on a run for the city, knowing full well that the force at Brentwood could not defend the place. Colonel Trueblood, commanding there, soon surrendered, and Fuller, from his hiding-place in the woods, saw captors and prisoners pass on the pike. After that, he was about to cross an open field near by, when happily he discovered a body of the enemy preparing to charge across the same field to the woods beyond, where a large number of negroes were cutting wood for the Government. Consequently he changed his course to the Granny White pike, and thus reached Nashville at the head of the frightened contrabands.

Rosecrans, with the advantage of high water in the Cumberland, besides his railroad communications, was nearly six months preparing for another campaign against Bragg, notwithstanding he was repeatedly urged, if not commanded, to advance, lest pending his inaction, General Johnston, Bragg's superior officer, should detach by rail a sufficient force to compel Grant to loosen

his hold on Vicksburg. Bruner and Mullarkey having left Rosecrans' head-quarters, operators John C. Holdridge, late of Western Tennessee, Jesse H. Bunnell, recently from the Department of the Potomac, and Robert M. Talbot, who had served under Generals McDowell, Burnside, Wright, and others, took their places. The telegraph had long been busy with orders for supplies. VanDuzer collected a large quantity of telegraph stores, including about one hundred miles of wire, for the grand movement which was ordered on the 23d of June, 1863. The army advanced, feigning a direct attack, but in fact striking at Bragg's flanks, particularly his right, causing him to retire on the twenty-ninth, and cross the Tennessee River soon after.

Thus Middle Tennessee and so much of Northern Alabama as lies north of the river, was again in the virtual possession of the Unionists, who now bent their energies to effect the restoration of the railroads and telegraphs as indispensable to further progress. VanDuzer reported his operations as follows:

The line kept pace with the advance of the army from Murfreesboro, and my party entered Tullahoma and opened an office at General Rosecrans' head-quarters three hours after the establishment of such head-quarters, having opened offices at Fosterville and Wartrace. On the fourth, the line was extended to Elk River and an office opened at the camp of the Pioneer Brigade; on the fifth, to Decherd, and on the seventh to the head-quarters of the Twentieth Army Corps, at Winchester. No further progress was attempted southward on this line during the month, but a branch line was rebuilt to McMinnville from Tullahoma, connecting the left wing of the army and the head-quarters of the Twenty-first Army Corps with general head-quarters, which, towards the end of the month, were moved to Winchester, and a line was rebuilt along the turnpike from Franklin to Columbia, Tenn. Early in August, I constructed a new line from Cowan to Tracy City, Tenn., and extended the line south along the Chattanooga Railroad to Bridgeport, Ala., opening offices at Anderson and Stevenson; at department head-quarters, near Stevenson; at head-quarters Fourteenth Army Corps, near Bolivar, Ala., and at Bridgeport, Ala. At the same time, the line was extended south from Columbia to Pulaski, Tenn., and west from Stevenson, Ala., to Brownboro, or more properly to head-quarters Second Cavalry Division, on Flint River, with offices at Scottsboro and Larkensville, Ala.

Thus the lines of telegraph abandoned by Buell one year previous, were mostly restored. Many of the operators who served in this section under Buell were replaced in their former positions, or otherwise located at railroad stations or other points. Among those thus employed were J. T. Joyce, A. M. Nichols, R. B. Hoover, Geo. C. Peirce, John P. Lathrop, T. E. Rawlings, Geo. Railton, John Lonergan, E. W. Atwater, W. W. Burhans, Hugh Craig, Robert Wagner, J. C. Gregg, W. H. Hartman, W. R. Plum, F. S. VanValkenburg, W. H. Miller, Wm. Patterson, E. J. Wilson, J. T. Rabbeth, I. C. Showerman, Ed. Schermerhorn, M. C. Baldwin, Con Dwyer, S. Ford Perdue, H. R. Mapes, Frank B. Tyler and H. W. Plum, the last five of whom were serving in Nashville. On the line leading to Louisville were J. N. Brooks, Sam Barth, Martin Barth, J. A. Cassell, A. C. and J. Jones, W. S. Pierson, C. H. Griffith, James Forker, E. W. Atwater, John D. Richardson, and others. Geo. W. Bell was at the Glasgow end of a new line, built from Cave City, in June, to watch such raiders as Morgan.

From the outbreak of the rebellion, the Federal Government had striven to possess and hold East Tennessee. Never was such possession so important to the loyalists there residing, as since the sweeping Confederate conscription acts, which dragged the Union citizen into the armies, or drove him into the mountain fastnesses, where he was hunted by armed men. General Burnside recently from the Army of the Potomac, with a view to the repossession of the district of East Tennessee, vacated by Federal General Morgan, was, in March, 1863, given the command of the Department of the Ohio, with head-quarters at Cincinnati, O. Charles Jacques managed his telegraph office there, assisted by two others. The military line, from Burnside's office by way of Lexington, connecting Nicholasville, Ky., was extended so as to place Burnside in immediate communication with his main forces and out-posts, rendering surprise in force at Lexington and Frankfort impossible.

As Chattanooga was the objective of the Army of the Cumberland, so Knoxville, one hundred and twelve miles north-east of Chattanooga, was that of the Army of the Ohio, which was organizing to advance simultaneously and in co-operation with

Rosecrans' command. While the authorities were fearing that Rosecrans would not prevent another invasion of Kentucky in force, Confederate General Pegram, late in March, 1863, entered that State through the Cumberland Mountains, ostentatiously proclaiming that Breckenridge was following his (Pegram's) cavalry with infantry, for the redemption of the State. General Carter was in immediate command of the Federals, whose advance guard was at Crab Orchard, where John Lonergan was operating. Twenty-two soldiers of the First Kentucky and Seventh Ohio Cavalry and First and Second Tennessee Mounted Infantry were posted there, to keep up communication with General Carter's command in the direction of Somerset, General Welch's stationed at Liberty, Colonel Gilbert's at Mt. Vernon, and Colonels Alexander and Bird's at Lancaster. This was the general location when Pegram entered Crab Orchard about daylight, *en route*, as he said, to rescue Kentucky from her oppressors. Lonergan, in his night clothes, narrowly escaped capture by hiding under a chicken coop in the rear of Carson's Hotel. A negro woman rolled a log of firewood in front of the coop, completely hiding the man in white from the woman in black, and Pegram in particular. Pegram pressed forward upon Danville, where operator Benner was exposed to his musketry fire, and from whence Carter was driven across the Kentucky River, by which time it was discovered that the raiders were unsupported, and were in fact driving a larger force than they possessed. So the tide changed.

Burnside, in turn, in June, sent a cavalry force into East Tennessee, which greatly injured the railroad, and captured many prisoners and arms.

About the same time that Rosecrans advanced from Murfreesboro upon Tullahoma, General J. H. Morgan, with a view, at least in part, of so engaging the attention of Burnside as to prevent his threatening Bragg's rear by an advance into East Tennessee, essayed from Sparta the most daring movement yet undertaken. Crossing the Cumberland near Burksville, July 1, with a mounted force of over two thousand men and four guns, he was defeated at a Green River bridge, which he attempted to capture. Undaunted by this failure, Morgan pushed on in the direction of Lebanon, Ky. His operator, Ellsworth, failing to

deceive the telegraphers on the Stanford line, took a small command over to the Lebanon branch railroad, near St. Mary's, and by cutting off Lebanon, succeeded in deceiving operator E. W. Atwater, at the Junction. Circumstances conspired against Atwater, for the night previous, Bennett, the night operator at Lebanon had invited him to spend the Fourth in that place, and as the latter had just received a bran-new and showy uniform, which he was anxious to exhibit, he resolved to take the 8:30, A. M., train for Lebanon. About ten, P. M., the line ceased to work. It seems that Morgan had taken the precaution, before appearing in front of Lebanon, to cut this wire. About six, A. M., of the fourth, Ellsworth connected his instrument with the main line, which he ran to the ground by his side, when the following conversation took place. "Z" was the call of Lebanon Junction; "B," that of Lebanon.

"Z"—"Good morning, Bennett; where have you been all night? 18." (Meaning, what is the matter.)

"B"—"Been on duty all night; line O. K., S. E. of here; noticed it open between us; seems to be O. K. now."

"Z"—"Any news about guerrillas?"

"B"—"There was a report of some in the country yesterday, but everything quiet here."

"Z"—"I will be there about noon."

"B"—"That's right; will have something set up for you."

At 8:30, the Lebanon train arrived at the Junction from Louisville, with about thirty passengers, of whom five were women. The conductor asked Atwater if he had heard of guerrillas on the branch, adding that a message *via* Danville and Lexington stated that guerrillas had burned a bridge near Lebanon. But the operator satisfied the conductor that all was well, and boarding the train Atwater and all started. At New Hope, they learned that a culvert near St. Marys, five miles from Lebanon, was burned and the track torn up. Thirteen soldiers boarded the train here as a guard. It proceeded, and notwithstanding the engineer was cautioned, the engine and several cars were thrown from the track in a cut just beyond St. Marys. Immediately, about thirty of Morgan's men fired into the train from the right, killing a Union soldier and wounding an Irish passenger in the shoulder. The latter rushed into the baggage

car in wildest excitement, exclaiming, "My God! My God! We are all kilt, shure. Ivery mither's son uv us will be murthered till we're dead. Howly Mither, have mercy on us." The guards leaped from the car windows on the left side and fought under cover of the train until the enemy decamped; but they soon halted, as if to return to the train.

At this stage of affairs, Atwater was sent for aid and had proceeded but a short distance when he was approached by three mounted men, who fired at him until he waved a copy of the Louisville *Journal* in token of surrender, when the following conversation occurred:

Ellsworth.—"Where did you get on the train and where are you going?"

Atwater.—"At the Junction; going to spend the Fourth with a friend in Lebanon."

E.—"What is your name?"

A.—"Atwater."

E.—"You are an operator at 'Z' and I was talking with you over the line this morning, having cut the wire and connected this instrument. I found out what I wished and I am the one who invited you to Lebanon. I am Ellsworth, John Morgan's operator."

The reader is left to imagine Atwater's confusion when Ellsworth informed him how completely he had been deceived, but mopping the perspiration from his face, Atwater replied, "I congratulate myself, my dear friend, that I have fallen into such good hands. If I must be a prisoner, let my captor be an operator; and now let us have those cool drinks." "All right," said Ellsworth, as he drew a revolver upon Atwater, "give me your revolver and holster and follow me." It was of no use for Atwater to protest that he was only an operator. His new uniform, Ellsworth insisted, made him a fit subject for Libby prison. But a company of Union cavalry that left Lebanon on a scout before the attack, had heard the affair at St. Marys and were now seen in the distance, hurrying to participate; consequently, Ellsworth and his comrades rapidly rode off.

Learning from three prisoners captured that the enemy was a detachment from Morgan's command and that he was moving on Lebanon, Atwater, by tapping one end of the line on a

ground connection, telegraphed to General Boyle at Louisville an account of the brush at St. Marys and the news of Morgan's near presence.

When Morgan appeared, on the fifth, the Federals at Lebanon were measurably well prepared to receive him. Hanson's brave four hundred fought seven hours before surrendering. George Purdon and —— Bennett made good their escape, saving their instruments. It was an exciting day for the people at Lebanon. Plunder, pillage, murder and insults continued until the setting of the sun. At dusk, Morgan's command began moving upon Bardstown. Bennett, who had secured a refuge for the night in a muddy trench just out of Lebanon, connected his instrument and telegraphed direct to General Boyle what had occurred and was transpiring, the Louisville line being connected at "Z" for that purpose.

After capturing Bardstown, where T. H. Smith operated, Morgan struck the Louisville & Nashville Railroad, capturing James Forker, operator at Bardstown Junction. Ellsworth interviewed Forker at his office in the following energetic style: "Hello, sonny," said Ellsworth, handling a cocked revolver, "move one inch except as I direct, and you are a dead man." At this time a passenger train left "Z" for Louisville and was duly reported. Morgan captured the stockade at Salt River bridge, six miles north of "Z," and stopped the train with his cannon. The doors of the coaches being guarded, the passengers were regularly allowed to surrender their money, watches, jewelry and baggage, after which the conductor was permitted to return with his train to "Z." Operator Lenhart, in the railroad superintendent's office in Louisville, asked Forker, "Has the train passed north yet?" "Tell him yes," said Ellsworth, which Forker was obliged to do. He was then mounted on a mule and sent to camp. The following evening he appeared at "Z" without hat, coat or boots. Next day the line was restored.

Morgan moved on Brandenburg, where he captured two steamboats, by which he ferried over the Ohio his forces, now much increased, and after burning one of the steamers, he moved northwardly to Salem, Indiana. By this time the civil and military authorities were doing their utmost to effect his

capture. From Salem, Morgan went north-east *via* Vernon to Harrison, on the Ohio State line, and around Cincinnati, moving quite near there, to Miami; thence easterly through Batavia, Sardinia, Jasper and Piketon to the Ohio River at Pomeroy; thence eight miles up the river to Buffington's Ford, where eight hundred of his men were captured. Over three hundred swam the river at Belleville and escaped; over a thousand surrendered there; but Morgan and perhaps two hundred others, pushing on north-eastwardly, struck the river again above Marietta; thence they moved to New Lisbon, where they surrendered, July 26.

Soon after crossing the Ohio, Morgan captured a passenger train, and among those robbed was Patrick Mullarkey, a Federal operator, on his way to Grant's department.

The Western Union and railroad telegraph operators in Southern Indiana and Ohio certainly deserve a good share of the credit which was accorded to the troops under Hobson, Shackleford and Judah, and to the gunboats that patrolled the Ohio, for the capture of Morgan and his command, for by no other means could the enemy have been so harassed on all sides, as they were, by concerted action of the regular troops and militia; nor could the gunboats have been kept so well advised of Morgan's movements. Of course Morgan destroyed the telegraph wherever met, but cutting the lines as he advanced did not greatly interfere with telegraphing to towns ahead of him by circuitous routes, of which there were many.

In June, a line was built by Lehr from Lexington to Mount Sterling, Kentucky. Samuel B. Roberts operated there until 1864.

On the 16th of August, General Burnside began his great march upon Knoxville, having a force in hand of about twenty thousand. The route of his main army was from Crab Orchard through Mount Vernon, London, Williamsburg, Chitwood, Montgomery, Kingston, to Knoxville. Charles W. Jacques, who came with the General from the East, and C. H. Johns, accompanied Burnside as cipher and telegraph operators, while Lehr, chief operator in the district, advanced by the old route, opening an office every night at Burnside's head-quarters, until Barboursville was reached, when he accompanied the General

to the main army at Williamsburg. But the builders under W. L. Tidd advanced the line with De Courcy's forces directly upon Cumberland Gap. Lehr struck the rebel East Tennessee line at Loudon, capturing the operator there and finding everything in good working order, also many useful Confederate telegrams. Jacques took temporary charge of the office, and Lehr, going with the Federal cavalry, captured the operator and instruments at Campbell Station, when he pressed rapidly on with the Fifth Indiana cavalry, reaching Knoxville unannounced late in the afternoon of the 1st of September. Hastening to the city telegraph office, he entered the same, just as the two operators there retreated through a back door and escaped, without having done the slightest injury to any telegraphic apparatus or material. Lehr found in the office a large number of important messages, and just outside a good main battery. Communication was opened immediately with Burnside at Loudon. Johns, who also came with the cavalry, was left to operate the Knoxville office, and Lehr and the troopers advanced up the valley of the Tennessee, past Strawberry Plains and Newmarket to Morristown, where the operator was captured in his office, and the superintendent of this line in the town. Pressing on again, through Bull's Gap to Greenville and Jonesboro, the cavalry drove General Sam Jones into Virginia. The operators at these places, like the one at Morristown, were captured and pressed into the Federal telegraph service; George E. Jones being one and perhaps Sam Reese another. At each of these offices, a Union lieutenant was left in attendance and two soldiers on guard, the former provided with a cipher key, under the cover of which all messages were transmitted. And in this way one hundred and twenty-six miles of telegraph were opened by Lehr *within five days after striking the Loudon bridge;* a feat not equalled even by Crittenton's remarkable operations in 1862, under Mitchell, in Northern Alabama. General Burnside, who, on every occasion, manifested the highest regard for the telegraph service, was greatly pleased at this result.

From Morristown Burnside turned his mounted force toward Cumberland Gap, which he now sought to reduce. On this route was found a poorly constructed line leading to the Gap, where General Frazier was in command of about two thou-

sand Confederates and fourteen guns. Lehr, with fifty cavalrymen, repaired this wire in Burnside's wake. That General sent couriers around the Gap to De Courcy, and learned of his arrival and that he had artillery in position to begin shelling. Frazier, soon after, finding himself effectually cut off from all aid, surrendered to Burnside on the ninth, at noon. The telegraph was connected across the mountain on the same day, making nearly two hundred miles of Federal telegraph built or recovered in East Tennessee in nine days, and placing Burnside not only in communication with his own exposed posts, but with the authorities in Washington and with Rosecrans, who was now again marching against Bragg, as we shall soon discover. A few days later, Burnside returned to Knoxville and had the pleasure of a telegraphic confab with President Lincoln, the General-in Chief Halleck, and Secretary Stanton, who were in the War office at Washington. During this interesting talk, Burnside was congratulated upon his great success. In these telegraphic operations, Burnside's chief of staff, General Hartsuff, an old-time operator, rendered valuable aid.

This was the condition of affairs when, September 10, William L. Gross, late of Fuller's department, was appointed by Colonel Stager, "Assistant Superintendent of the United States Military Telegraphs for that portion of the Department of the Ohio embracing Central and East Kentucky and East Tennessee." This new position had been tendered to E. B. Gorton, of Cincinnati, but was declined by him on the ground that he was satisfied where he was. Lehr, chief operator, resigned, and Captain Bruch's brother, Adam, was appointed in his stead, with head-quarters in Knoxville, Gross establishing his at Danville. Gross received a commission as captain and assistant quartermaster, October 27, 1863. We have already noted his service within Grant's department, beginning as manager of Cairo office, August 12, 1862. Discovering his disposition to work and executive qualifications, VanDuzer at first, then Bruch and afterward Fuller added to his labors until it became necessary to remove him entirely from the key, of which he was but an indifferent manipulator. Fuller made him chief clerk, in which position he exercised much discretion regarding the management of telegraphic affairs in that department. How successfully he

performed his part may be gathered from his appointment as captain, and how harmoniously, from the presentation of a gold watch by his co-laborers in Memphis, as related in the next chapter. Captain Gross's appointment was solely the result of meritorious service in the telegraph department — mainly clerical and executive in character. Doubtless his study of the law, but especially his contact with others, while teaching school and practising law, gave him a degree of confidence better calculated to inspire others with respect for his abilities than those enjoyed who had not been equally schooled by the friction of mind with mind.

WILLIAM L. GROSS.

William L. Gross was born in Herkimer County, New York, February 21, 1839. His father, a minister, moved to Illinois in 1844, and in 1848 settled on a farm in Knox Co. After a public schooling and an academic course, William, at seventeen, prosecuted his law studies while teaching. Afterward, he learned to telegraph, and took charge of the railroad telegraph office at Dwight, Illinois, but not with a purpose of continuing in that business. In 1862, at Springfield, Illinois, he formed a partnership with his brother, Eugene, who subsequently acquired a splendid reputation at the Bar, but soon after, the war fever overcame William's civic ambitions. Having obtained official permission to raise an infantry company, he labored night and day in Dwight and vicinity, making private and public appeals for recruits, with marked success. But a strife arose as to commissions, and Gross, not to compromise himself in an unseemly struggle for rank, accepted the position of man-

ager of Cairo military office, then proffered him by his friend, John C. VanDuzer. He is now a leading lawyer at the capital of Illinois.

Nothing unnoticed of special interest occurred in this district up to the middle of November, if we except a raid of seventy guerrillas into Danville, resulting in scaring a good many, routing Benner out of bed unceremoniously and disarranging things in his office. But the guerrillas were careful not to destroy any thing. It was the poorest conducted raid on record. Two hours after the guerrillas left, Benner had one thousand cavalry there from Camp Nelson. Perhaps it should be stated that Burnside became greatly angered at Superintendent Gross, because the line was down so much, but he insisted that it resulted from army teamsters breaking down the poles, and Captain Bruch represented that "this was no new thing. They (teamsters) have actually given us more trouble than the rebels. They break down poles and cut up the wire and use it for mending broken wagons; make lines to hang clothes on; tie up fodder and make pot-hooks, besides numerous other things. I *know* this, for I have seen it myself, and made complaints to generals in command, but have never seen any attempt made to stop it."

The following shows the lines, stations and operators in Gross's department at this time:

	Miles.		Miles.
Lexington to Mount Sterling, *via* Winchester	23	Lexington, *via* Nicholasville and Camp Nelson, to Danville	35
Lebanon to Columbia	40	Kingston to Loudon (about)	15
Lebanon, *via* Danville, Stanford, Crab Orchard, Mount Vernon, London, Barboursville, Cumberland Gap, and Tazewell, to Knoxville	216	Clinton to Knoxville	15
		Loudon, *via* Lenoirs, Knoxville, Morristown, and Greenville, to Jonesboro	126
		Stanford to Somerset	25
			495

These lines were operated by Adam Bruch, C. W. Jacques, C. H. Johns, Joe Anderson, J. R. Brown, Geo. Cole, John T. Wilber, Geo. J. Goalding, Geo. Purdon, C. H. Pond, A. W. Howell, F. C. Cook, Sam B. Roberts, W. H. Wilson, Thos. M. Sampson, T. G. Harvey, Jos. H. Gilkerson, W. H. Sisson, Sam Carey, J. S. Lyle, J. M. Spencer, Chas. A. Keefer, J. E. Nagle, G. D. Wil-

kinson, J. A. Torrence, S. W. Scott, E. T. Chapman and Thos. H. Smith. Sam Reese and Geo. E. Jones, Tennessee operators, who had convinced Lehr of their loyalty, were also employed on these lines.

As Burnside's movements were designed to be in concert with Rosecrans, it has seemed best to disclose their operations in the same chapter. We will, therefore, again turn attention to Tennessee and Northern Alabama. Having repaired his railroads and awaited the ripening of corn, Rosecrans advanced from various points, on the 16th of August, crossing the Tennessee at Stevenson, Bridgeport, Shell Mound and Capertons, and after shelling Chattanooga from Waldron's Ridge, he crossed a force at Harrison. Those crossing below at once, and the others subsequently, converged on Trenton, or vicinity, from whence McCook's corps pushed on through the mountains to Alpine, near Rome, Ga. Bragg evacuated Chattanooga to confront Rosecrans, and determine the issue in battle. The Union General, greatly deceived by Bragg's movements, imperiled his own army by stringing it out until the extreme ends were forty miles apart. Gen. Bragg, instead of retreating, was massing to crush Rosecrans in detail, which it is highly probable he might have done, had his orders been better executed. While Bragg was concentrating his whole force about La Fayette, nearly opposite Rosecrans' center, the latter, who had made Chattanooga his head-quarters, learned with amazement that the enemy was actually preparing for a general assault. This was about the 11th of September, and from that time to the 18th, the Union army may fairly be said to have been at the mercy of the Confederates, who were greatly strengthened by veteran forces from Virginia, Georgia and Mississippi, besides Buckner's corps from East Tennessee.

Instead of Burnside co-operating with Rosecrans, he had done him a positive injury by driving Buckner from East Tennessee and furnishing Rosecrans no equivalent.

Concerning telegraphic operations conducted under Captain VanDuzer's superintendency since the advance, he officially reported:

Early in September, the army crossed the Tennessee River, and I pushed the construction of a line along the railroad to Wauhatchie, at which point Brigadier General Wood, with a division of the Twenty-first Army Corps, threatened Chattanooga by Lookout Pass. Opening an office at the Running Water bridge, and opening a branch line through Murphy's Hollow to Deer Head Cove, with an office at Department head-quarters, at or near Trenton, Ga. On the ninth, this branch line was taken up, and the enemy having withdrawn to La Fayette, we pushed into Chattanooga and opened an office in the rooms just vacated by the rebel telegraphers.

Before quoting further, we will notice some incidental matters. By the Captain's orders, George C. Peirce had opened an office at Shell Mound, where Reynolds' division was crossing the river, and hearing from some of Wilder's cavalrymen that Bragg had evacuated Chattanooga, Rosecrans, September 5, ordered Reynolds to move to Running Water, keeping up telegraphic communication. Peirce was accordingly directed to take four men and necessary supplies, and proceed along the railroad, repairing the lines. He started from Shell Mound about two o'clock in the afternoon of that day; on a hand-car, with the men. They found little to do as the line was in good order. The army was marching along the highway, parallel with the railroad, but somewhat obscured from view by the trees and hills. Peirce proceeded much faster than the troops, as it subsequently appeared. Meeting citizens along the track, he gathered information which seemed to confirm previous reports of the *non*-existence of any rebel force that side of Chattanooga at least, and in fancied security the party moved along, and in due time reached a point within a short distance of Running Water bridge. Leaving the men to unload the car, Peirce proceeded along the track and stood upon one of the piers of the bridge, the superstructure of which had been burned by the rebels. He had hardly surveyed the splendid scenery about him, when he was startled by hearing a voice exclaim: "What you all doing up there" Turning to his right, not thirty feet distant, he saw a rebel cavalryman, with his carbine leveled at him. A glance showed that resistance would be of no use, as four more Confederates also put in an appearance. He replied: "I was just looking around." "Come down from there," was the next thing he heard. He

complied promptly, and was placed upon one of their horses and told to hang on to its rider for life. The squad having been out on a scout had arrived at the bridge at the same time Peirce did. During the ride he exchanged clothing with them and surrendered about everything of value he had, except twelve dollars in currency. By the time he reached the enemy's picket line, to all appearances he was as much of a rebel as any of them. They went direct to Chattanooga, which was *not* evacuated. Peirce was taken before General Bragg, who questioned him for more than an hour, trying to ascertain the strength of the Federal forces and location of their supplies. The operator professed such profound ignorance upon those subjects that about midnight he was sent to the guard-house; supposing he would go directly through the Confederacy, *via* Richmond, and in two or three weeks be back again. In this he was mistaken. From Chattanooga he was sent to Atlanta; from there direct to Richmond, where he was confined on Belle Isle until the following March, the seventh, when he was exchanged.

When the Murphrys Hollow line to Trenton was abandoned, on the ninth, Lonergan and Forbes were left without transportation at the signal station on Sand Mountain, where they had been forwarding the reports received from six connecting signal stations, which were variously located with the army. Forbes having manufactured a telegraphic order from General Thomas on Colonel Iredell at Bridgeport, for an ambulance for Lonergan, whose sickness was as genuine as the order which was duly honored, the two proceeded in the direction of Trenton, visiting houses by the way for something to eat, and realizing as they progressed that an army had preceded them. Stopping at a house late in the evening, a paroled Vicksburg Confederate officer startled them with the information, the truth of which the author doubts, that a large body of rebels was just ahead, and, at the suggestion of the officer, they turned up a hog-path, when their trials began, increasing as they advanced along the mountain and into the entanglements of the by-way. Darkness set in and hunger increased, but they pressed on as best they could, putting their shoulder to the wheels when the mule was stalled. About one A. M., they were halted by a vidette guard of the Fifteenth Pennsylvania cavalry under Lieutenant Kelley, who

had nothing for them to eat. At daylight, Forbes shot and roasted a pig, after which the operators rode into Chattanooga with Wood's division.

VanDuzer further reported:

On the 17th of September, Department head-quarters being near Crawfish Springs, I received an order from General Rosecrans to connect him by telegraph with Chattanooga, which order I obeyed, completing the line after the opening of the action on the morning of the nineteenth. Offices were opened at General Granger's head-quarters at Rossville; at a point in the rear of General Thomas' head-quarters and at Department Head-quarters, which latter office was moved at about noon to the house owned by Mrs. Glenn, to which point General Rosecrans had removed his head-quarters, where it was maintained during the day and until six o'clock A. M., of the twentieth. From six until nine, A. M., of the twentieth, the office nearest the front was the one in the Dry Valley, in General Thomas' rear, and Department Head-quarters office was only reopened for a few minutes before the driving in of the right of the line forced us back upon the road to Rossville, and no success attended my efforts to reopen farther to the front than the Dry Valley office before mentioned. This line to Rossville and the office at Rossville was kept open until the withdrawal of our line on Monday night (twenty-first and twenty-second) to the intrenchments of Chattanooga. During these two days (nineteenth and twentieth), my men, operators, builders and repairers, were often under fire, nearly all of them for the first time, and I take pleasure in declaring their uniform coolness and good behavior. I am especially indebted to Messrs. William Patterson, John C. Holdridge J. H. Bunnell, J. A. Fuller, W. W. Forbes and W. H. Miller for active, intelligent and fearless co-operation and support.

When the operators were driven from widow Glenn's, where they had rendered invaluable service, they opened an office on a stump at the entrance to Dry Valley. After the Union right was driven beyond the stump office, Captain VanDuzer, who, besides his telegraph duties, served Rosecrans as aide, directed Holdridge to open an office on the Rossville road. He had just succeeded in cutting the wire for that purpose when a brigade of infantry formed in line of battle immediately in front, and opened fire on the advancing enemy; bullets were flying as nu-

merous as hailstones in a cold storm. Bunnell called out for a ground wire and Holdridge cried, "Give me a ground wire; who's got a bayonet for a ground? I'll go find one," and off he started. A few moments later, the brigade gave way and John was swept on to Rossville, whence he probably accompanied Rosecrans to Chattanooga. Two days after, Bunnell met him at the office door in Chattanooga and asked, "Have you found that bayonet yet?"

Forbes and Fuller reported to General Granger at Rossville and opened an office in a tent. Granger directed the boys to mess with his orderlies, which they refused to do, as they thought the General should treat them as well as he would an officer. Shortly after the battle began, Patterson, chief of the field construction party, wanted a trophy, and induced Fuller to go with him to the battle-field to pick up a revolver. Leaving Forbes to attend office, they started on their foolish errand, but unexpectedly soon found themselves among Union soldiers in battle array and near a battery just going into action. About the same time, other Federals were seen coming in full retreat. A general confusion ensued, and the operators suddenly concluded that they did not want any trophies. This was the beginning of the rout of the right wing of the Union army on the twentieth, and as Fuller was well mounted, he reached his office ahead of the crowd and telegraphed Chattanooga his startling news. As division after division passed his office, reporting that the rebels were just behind, the operators were advised to fall in line for Chattanooga, but they would not go without proper orders. Night came at last, and theirs was the only tent standing. Telegrams to and from Rosecrans, Garfield, Steedman, Granger and others—general officers—were being sent or received nearly all that night.

The sanguinary conflict around widow Glenn's house and near the Chickamauga, beginning on the morning of the ninteenth and ending with the next day, wherein about fifty-six thousand Federals fought an equal number all day on the ninteenth—and about two-thirds of the national troops contended, at least from noon of the twentieth, with Bragg's army, reinforced the night before by Longstreet's corps from Virginia—was maintained on the part of the Confederates with gallantry unsurpassed; but

the Fourteenth Corps (Thomas') and the few brigades from Crittenden's and McCook's corps, that withstood the assaults of the victorious hosts that charged again and again, ever moving to the Federal right until Thomas' command was almost entirely enveloped and the Rossville road nearly gained, just as Granger comes to the rescue, barely in time to save the army from disintegration; such heroism, such gallantry! oh, how grand! Had McCook and Crittenden stopped at Rossville; had Rosecrans telegraphed his orders therefrom to Chattanooga, instead of going in person to attend to pontoons, and had these three officers reformed the shattered and retreating (four) divisions behind Gordon Granger's and fallen upon the enemy, as Longstreet had long feared would be done, how different might the issue have been!

The Federal loss in the two days' battle was about 2,000 killed and 9,412 wounded, or 16,336 killed, wounded and missing, besides fifteen thousand small arms and thirty-six guns, while the Confederates suffered the frightful loss of two-fifths of their army of whom only about two thousand were prisoners.

At seven, A. M., September 22, Rosecrans' army was in position at Chattanooga. The night before, Captain VanDuzer, at the head of his corps of operators and linemen, worked unceasingly in running trip-wires just above the ground and outside of the Federal defenses around Chattanooga, which were intended to throw the enemy charging the Unionists, and thereby confuse their ranks and render the charges abortive.

On the twenty-fourth, the Confederates took possession of the south bank of the Tennessee River and of Lookout Mountain, from which shells were fired into the Union camps. They were also in possession of the railroad bed, east of Bridgeport, and all communication by water, by rail and telegraph, with that point, was cut off. Rosecrans' beaten army lay besieged, with mountains and ridges in front; river, ridges and mountains in rear; three thousand wounded, suffering or dying for want of medicines and nourishment; the army itself on short allowance, with scarce ammunition enough for a day's battle, and only one practicable roadway open for supplies, and that sixty miles long, precipitous, circuitous, wild and forbidding, by way of Jasper to Bridgeport, to which latter place thousands of horses were

sent, leaving ten thousand other animals in and about Chattanooga, that died of starvation.

From the twenty-fourth to October 1, VanDuzer was preparing to construct a telegraph in part over this cruel road—the route adopted being from Bridgeport, *via* Battle Creek, Jasper, Pryor's and Haley Trace, over Waldron's ridge to the river road at the Suck, and thence to Chattanooga, in all forty-two miles. Operator N. S. Townsend and a company of the Sixth Ohio (sharpshooters) deserve great credit for their laborious and hazardous work on this line, the completion of which, wrote Van Duzer officially, was delayed until the 17th of October, on account of the passage of wagon trains, laden with subsistence, and the loss of his outfit and dispersion of his builders by Wheeler's raid through the Sequatchie Valley, and by the presence of rebel sharpshooters on the south bank of the river at various points where the line ran necessarily close to the north bank. For nearly four miles, between the foot of Williams' Island and the Suck, the whole distance was under fire of rebel sharpshooters, armed with Mississippi rifles, themselves completely covered by rocks and trees, and their average distance from the road at the foot of the cliff along which the line ran, less than four hundred yards. This part of the line VanDuzer was compelled to build and repair in the night, and so watchful was the enemy that the stroke of axe or blow of hatchet would often bring a volley from a dozen rifles, well directed and dangerous.

This condition of things continued until the seizure of the south bank, at Brown's Ferry, by the forces under command of Brigadier General W. F. Smith, and the occupation of the Lookout Valley by the Eleventh and Twelfth Army Corps. In building and maintaining this line, the Captain reported himself as much indebted to John C. Gregg, operator, who had lately joined him from the Army of the Potomac, and who volunteered to go over and repair the line when every builder and repairer, enlisted man and civilian employé, alike refused to go, deterred by the danger to be incurred. During the month of November, the line from Bridgeport to the Running Water bridge was rebuilt, and a new line constructed over Raccoon Mountain to Kelly's Ferry, where an office was opened; thence to General

Hooker's head-quarters in the Lookout Valley, and thence, *via* Brown's Ferry, to Chattanooga, abandoning the wire on the north shore of the river. During all of November, a party was kept at work putting a second wire upon the poles between Nashville and Bridgeport, and immediately after the actions on Lookout Mountain and Mission Ridge, soon to be noticed, both the lines were put up along the railroad to Chattanooga, and that over the mountain, *via* Kelly's Ferry, was abandoned.

About the 1st of October, the Eleventh and Twelfth Army Corps, from the Army of the Potomac, arrived, and were located mainly along the railroad from Bridgeport to Nashville.

Pursuant to instructions, General Grant arrived at Cairo, October 16, and reported by telegraph to Secretary Stanton, who immediately replied, "Meet me at Louisville." The Secretary at the same time directed Colonel Stager to accompany him, and gave the Colonel the following *carte blanche* order to arrange for the meeting:

WAR DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON,
ORDERED: October 16, 1863.

That all Railroad Companies be and are hereby authorized and directed to furnish a special train to Colonel Stager, Superintendent of Military Telegraphs, and give him the utmost dispatch to the points designated by him. (Signed) EDWIN M. STANTON,
Secretary of War.

So efficiently was this order executed, that Stanton and Stager met Grant and his staff, including operator Beckwith, at Indianapolis, Ind., from whence they traveled to Louisville, and after about two hours additional consultation in the Gault House, Beckwith was given (nineteenth) two despatches for transmission, one of which telegraphed, by operator John J. Flanagan, relieved Rosecrans of his command, and the other appointed Geo. H. Thomas in his stead. At the same time, the Departments of the Tennessee, Cumberland and Ohio, over one thousand, three hundred miles in extent, were consolidated into the Military Division of the Mississippi, under the command of General Grant. The next message, dated at 11:30, P. M., of the same day, was no less important, and was, in part:

Hold Chattanooga at all hazards; I will be there as soon as possible.

To which brave Thomas answered, before Grant retired that night:

I will hold the town till we starve.

It was because Bragg fully expected to starve the army that he did not attack it. Grant went to Chattanooga, says General Badeau,

Telegraphing to Halleck and to Sherman, to Porter and to Thomas and to Burnside on the way, attending to the supplies and directing the movements of his three armies; ordering vegetables to Chattanooga, securing gunboats to protect Sherman, and directing working parties to re-make Thomas' roads.

We will see in the succeeding chapter that Sherman, with his own (Fifteenth) corps, and a part of Hurlburt's, proceeded from Vicksburg *via* Memphis and Corinth, to the relief of Rosecrans as soon as possible after the disaster on the Chickamauga. The line from Stevenson to Huntsville was abandoned when the enemy repossessed Lookout Mountain; but now that Sherman was advancing and Bragg threatening Knoxville, if not intending an advance on Nashville, it became a matter of vast consequence that communication be reopened along the Huntsville road, as Sherman was expected to emerge at Decatur. General Crook, commanding the Second Cavalry division, was sent to scout that line as far west as Maysville, Alabama, and John Lonergan, operator, was sent to Crook on an engine with a Captain Craig and citizen Sheets, a scout, and a guard of eighteen men. At Woodville, the engine was dropped into a culvert by the explosion of a torpedo, breaking Sheets' ankle. The guerrillas under Frank Gurly immediately fired upon the party, which formed behind the engine and repelled the enemy. Darkness set in with a heavy storm. The Fourth Ohio cavalry at Paint Rock bridge was the nearest Union force, and it was decided that Captain Craig, conductor Hammell and Lonergan should undertake the dangerous task of apprising Major Patton, commanding at the bridge, of the situation, while the soldiers defended the engine and tender.

For two miles they followed the track, by the flashes of lightning, but total darkness was preferred, as a volley was expected at every flash, for they were as near Rhoddy's troops as

their own. In passing near Paint Rock bridge, through a long stone cut, in which a strong stream of water ran, making, with the rain, so much noise that a voice was hardly audible, Lonergan led the party, moving in single file, when they were ordered to halt a number of times before hearing the command. Finally Lonergan, as ordered, advanced alone, carrying his instrument, and when just in front of the videttes, the lightning revealed four men covering him with their guns. They proved to be of Patton's command. The sergeant stated that several times he had his men level their carbines in the direction of the three, intending to fire, and as often told them to recover arms. The danger was all the greater as, only a few hours previous, the troops had repelled an attack by rebel scouts in that same cut. Relief was immediately dispatched and at midnight Paint Rock bridge was in communication with Chattanooga, when the following despatch, dated October 24, from Grant for Sherman, who was restoring the railroad, was received:

> Drop everything east of Bear Creek and move with your entire force toward Stevenson until you receive further orders. The enemy are evidently moving a large force toward Cleveland and may break through our lines and move on Nashville, in which event, your troops are the only forces at command that could beat them there.

This message was given for delivery to that prince of scouts, Corporal Pike, whose escape down the river to Tuscumbia was narrow as his venture was hazardous and successful. When Sherman received this telegram, he ceased building the railroad and crossed the river at Eastport. At Waterloo, Wayne H. Parsons, Sherman's operator, who had on foot overtaken the General, was furnished a horse. At Florence, he was ordered to push on with despatches to Deckard, Tennessee, seventy-five miles. Escorted by Lieutenant Audenried, with one hundred troopers, he reached Deckard after a dangerous and tiresome ride of eighteen hours and a loss of two men killed by bushwhackers.

Parsons, without a word of explanation, and to the greatest astonishment and concern of little Jimmy Lowe, who operated there with a paper instrument, and was consequently unable to

tell what devilish tricks that mud-bedaubed, rain-soaked and weather-beaten stranger was up to, transmitted Sherman's messages to Grant and received the following in reply:

> Come on to Stevenson and Bridgeport with your four divisions; I want your command to aid in a movement to force the enemy back from their present position and to make Burnside secure in his.

Leaving Jimmy Lowe to attend his little sutler shop, by which he turned an honest penny, and to ask Chattanooga all sorts of questions about the stranger, who for the fun of the thing, vanished as unceremoniously as he had entered, Parsons returned to Sherman at Fayetteville.

On the twenty-third, most of Sherman's troops crossed the Tennessee north of Chattanooga.

Late in October, Hooker, concentrating most of his troops, possessed Lookout Valley in force, after a severe engagement with Longstreet. Thus the river, the railroad and direct wagon roads were entirely within Federal hands up to about nine miles of Chattanooga, and no longer was there any thought of starvation. November 7, Grant, who had become greatly exercised over Burnside's situation, owing to Longstreet's departure to crush the Federals in East Tennessee, directed Thomas to attack, but that officer was wholly unable to do so as he had no horses to move his artillery. Again Bragg detached troops to aid Longstreet, but Grant could not stir until Sherman came up, when Thomas obtained animals; but Sherman's movements were unavoidably delayed and Grant was restive under his restraints, fearing that Burnside would be starved into a capitulation or retreat, or that Bragg would escape without punishment until he could reunite his army. A general attack was ordered for the twenty-first, but Sherman did not come; the twenty-third, he was only partially ready, owing to broken bridges, but the battle was begun, Sherman on the left, Thomas on the center and Hooker on the right. Orchard Knob, in the center, was carried on the twenty-third, Lookout Mountain, by Hooker, on the twenty-fourth, and then the whole line of rebel works along Missionary Ridge, the next day.

The South was paralyzed by the blow, generally regarded as

impossible. The Confederates were pursued beyond Ringgold. It is stated that Grant's forces in action numbered sixty thousand to Bragg's forty thousand. The Federals lost seven hundred and fifty-seven killed and four thousand, five hundred and twenty-nine wounded. Doubtless the enemy suffered near the same in casualties, but six thousand, one hundred and forty-two prisoners and forty-two guns were captured from them. In short, their rout was as complete as it was terrible. Parsons accompanied Sherman and was under fire nearly all one day, counting at one time, the smoke of nine shells that burst over their heads simultaneously. Beckwith was with Grant from first to last.

The glad tidings of the great victory spread faster than the winds, more rapid than sound, speedier than light. The lightnings heralded the triumph. Jesse Bunnell, M. C. Baldwin, W. H. Miller and William Patterson, at the Chattanooga end; H. W. Plum, F. S. VanValkenburg, Cass G. Sholes, Ellis J. Wilson, and others, at Nashville, worked untiringly, night and day, to forward the news, official and reportorial, as well as the great number of private messages announcing all manner of fortunes and misfortunes incident to a battle. Even Dana's description of the battle above the clouds sped over that metallic thread, to an eager people.

Let us now turn again to East Tennessee. Longstreet, with twenty thousand men and eighty guns, arrived at Sweetwater, November 13, and, moving northward, obeyed Bragg's instructions to keep open telegraphic communication with him, as the army advanced. Reaching Loudon on the fourteenth, about five thousand men crossed the Tennessee near Le Noir, Longstreet's main command remaining on the south side, but connected by a pontoon bridge. Such was the enemy's position while Burnside and his generals were holding a council of war, at which it was decided to make a night attack upon the isolated five thousand. General Jeff. C. Davis, at ten, P. M., was about leaving Burnside's quarters, to begin the assault—in fact, he had reached the door on his way, when a messenger rushed up and handed Jacques, the operator, a cipher despatch, just received. Davis awaited its translation. It proved to be an order to Burnside from Grant, to draw Longstreet across the river and as far north

toward Knoxville as possible. This changed the whole aspect of affairs, and Burnside who had but five thousand men in hand was obliged to make forced marches to reach Knoxville with his trains, ahead of Longstreet, who took the shorter road.

From the time Burnside first learned from Grant of Longstreet's movement, which was about five days before Longstreet put in an appearance, up to eleven o'clock, A.M., of the nineteenth, except perhaps a few hours on the twelfth, Grant and Burnside were in telegraphic communication. Burnside, by the use of the telegraph, concentrated his troops at Knoxville to the number of twelve thousand—Longstreet in the meantime having been reinforced. The rebels tapped the Gap line on the seventeenth, but allowed the Federals to work to Knoxville until the forenoon of the nineteenth, doubtless in hopes of obtaining valuable information. The above statement is predicated upon the fact that cipher telegrams, to and from Grant during those days, were published in Southern newspapers, with a request for their translation. A number of the operators at posts contiguous to Knoxville entered that city with the garrisons. Captain Bruch reported that "during the siege, lines were built to all the forts and operated by them day and night. Great praise is due to Mr. Adam Bruch, Chief Operator, and his assistant operators, for their untiring energy and bravery in constructing and operating these lines; every man working almost constantly day and night, and under the fire of the enemy during the siege."

Early on the morning of the first day of the partial investment, Jacques volunteered to serve as aide on the staff of General Sanders, and rode out to the front with him and others—a gay and happy party—little thinking that before returning they must pass through a fight involving a Federal loss of one hundred killed and wounded. But it so happened, General Sanders himself being one of the killed. Jacques and another of the party were wounded, the former slightly. Another lost a horse, killed under him.

As soon as the enemy began to close in on Burnside, all the telegraph wire within reach was taken down and fastened to stakes about ten inches above ground, in front of the trenches and forts, to trip the enemy in case of a charge. This worked admirably, for when Longstreet's troops, brigade after brigade,

were hurled against Fort Sanders, about daybreak on the 29th of November, many fell over these wires; the front ranks were thrown into confusion near the fort, from which grape, canister and bullets were reaping a harvest of casualties, numbering near one thousand before the assaults were abandoned. Many of the assailants thus tripped, supposed they were shot, and others lost their arms. Charles Jacques was operating at Fort Sanders at this time. Burnside's office in the city was telegraphically connected with this fort and the quarters of General Shackleford and others. After the enemy had twice planted their flag on the parapet of Sanders, and each time been driven off with dreadful slaughter, of which Burnside was constantly informed, Jacques telegraphed that the enemy were coming again. Just then a shell cut the wire, and as it was certain death for any one to venture out to repair it, Burnside, who of course heard nothing further from the fort, supposed it was captured, and rode out to where his reserves were posted, expecting every moment to see the enemy coming over the hill.

The following operators were stationed in Knoxville during the siege, viz., Adam Bruch, C. W. Jacques, C. H. Johns, George Cole, and perhaps others. Joe Anderson was with Colonel Bird's command, cut off at Kingston, where several affairs took place with the enemy, under General Wheeler.

After Grant had driven Bragg from Missionary Ridge, he received despatches from the Federal advance telegraph office at Tazewell, where J. A. Torrence operated, notifying him that Burnside could not hold out longer than until about the 1st of December; hence it became a matter of gravest consequence to apprise that officer of the fact that Gordon Granger and Sherman had been sent to his relief, and would probably arrive by the 2d of December. Accordingly, Secretary Stanton, who was keenly impressed with the importance of informing Burnside, telegraphed for Colonel Stager to come to the key. Stager had retired, but it was his custom to have an instrument in circuit by his bedside, for any emergency, and repeated calling awakened him. Stanton in Washington asked Stager, who was in his bedchamber at Cleveland, Ohio, to forward the message to Burnside from four separate points by the most trusty means. The Colonel called up Captain Bruch, in Louisville, Ky., and the latter the

operators at four of the offices nearest to Burnside. Thus it happened that in the dead of night, four telegraph repairers, each with a copy of the cipher message notifying Burnside of the approach of Union troops, were started from their respective stations on their important and perilous journeys. Stanton had promised to do every thing in his power for either that might fall into the enemy's hands, but it is believed all reached Burnside safely. Thus was the news of succor carried to Burnside, whose army was saved. East Tennessee was redeemed, and the telegraph rebuilt by Gross and VanDuzer, from Knoxville to Chattanooga and the strategic localities of East Tennessee, and Chattanooga thoroughly reclaimed to the Union, to be harassed indeed thereafter, but never again to be surrendered to a hostile army.

CHAPTER V.

TELEGRAPHIC AFFAIRS IN WEST TENNESSEE IN THE FALL OF 1863.— NICHOLSON'S DEATH.— GENERAL SHERMAN'S ESCAPE. — FORREST'S RAID. — MEMPHIS. — PRESENTATIONS.

The history of the army telegraph service is fringed with many sad pictures. We are now to relate the misfortunes of John Nicholson. John was the eldest of the seven children of his very poor but worthy parents, who resided in Woodstock, Canada West. He and George B. Cowlam, whom we have noticed in connection with the "Merrimac" fight, were taught to telegraph by James Izard at Woodstock, in 1859. H. P. Dwight very kindly gave Nicholson a small office; but as he was the main-stay of the family and a mortgage on his father's place was maturing, with no prospect of its payment from the salary young Nicholson could earn in Canada, he entered the United States Military Telegraph service, May 7, 1863, in the ardent hope of saving enough money to cancel the mortgage, but later, he even aspired to the erection of a comfortable house for his parents, brothers and sisters. He was sent to Glendale, Mississippi, but his quarters were so different from what he had been accustomed to that his health was soon impaired. On June 25, he wrote:

> I have got an old shed that the rain just pours through; might as well go out of doors on a rainy day. Every night that it rains the water pours down on top of my bed, which is not very comfortable. * * * The doctor says that unless I get a better place to stay in, I will be in the hospital before long.

The trouble was, that the Colonel commanding there said it was the post quarter-master's duty to repair the office, and he shirked it, saying it was the Colonel's. When Captain Fuller heard that Nicholson was sick, he placed him in the officers' hospital in Memphis, where he received the best of care; but August 25 he

died. His parents were stricken with grief, and the poor mother was greatly cast down because she was unable to defray the expense attendant upon a removal of the body that she might once more look upon her son's features. These facts coming to the knowledge of his comrades on the Memphis & Charleston line, they each subscribed five dollars, which, with Messrs. Fuller and Gross's subscription, paid for embalming and expressing the remains to Woodstock, leaving one hundred and fifty dollars, earned by deceased, to go entirely to his father. Such acts of kindness are ennobling; but a more sympathetic and generous body of men than those of the Telegraph Corps never lived. The subscribers were C. H. Spellman, Ellis Stone, L. B. Spellman, Joseph Blish, Jr., J. J. Egan, Fred W. Snell, R. S. Fowler, W. A. Thayer, C. McReynolds, J. W. Atwell, W. B. Somerville, Ed Kinney, R. J. Hughes, E. F. Butler and repairers James Rail and John Pursel.

Rosecrans having suffered a terrible defeat at Chickamauga, Tennessee, General Halleck sent Slocum's (Eleventh) and Howard's (Twelfth) corps from the East, under Hooker, and late in September, 1863, Sherman was ordered to move by water to Memphis and thence east, repairing the Memphis & Charleston road east of Corinth, as far as Athens, where he was to report to Rosecrans. Sherman reached Colliersville, twenty-six miles from Memphis, by train, (a small force being also on board,) about noon of October 11; some of his troops having already reached Corinth, and yet others were in the rear on foot. Among the latter was Corse's division, about eighteen miles back. Sherman's train had gone perhaps a half mile farther, when picket firing began and the train stopped. A member of General Chalmer's staff demanded the surrender of Colliersville and its forces. General Sherman, in his "Memoirs," says:

I saw Anthony, Dayton and the rebel bearer of the flag in conversation, and the latter turn his horse to ride back, when I ordered Colonel McCoy to run to the station and get a message over the wires as quickly as possible to Memphis and Germantown, to hurry forward Corse's division. I then ordered the train to back to the depot and drew back the battalion of regulars to the small earth redoubt near it. The depot building was of brick and had been punctured with loop-holes. To its east, about two hundred yards,

was a small square earthwork or fort, into which were put a part of the regulars, along with the company of the Sixty-sixth Indiana already there. The rest of the men were distributed into the railroad cut and in some shallow rifle-trenches near the depot. We had hardly made these preparations when the enemy was seen forming in a long line on the ridge to the south, about four hundred yards off, and soon after two parties of cavalry passed the railroad on both sides of us, cutting the wires and tearing up some rails. Soon they opened on us with artillery. * * The fighting continued all round us for three or four hours, when we observed signs of drawing off, which I attributed to the rightful cause—the rapid approach of Corse's division, which * * arrived * * on the double-quick.

Edwin F Butler was the operator at Colliersville, and bravely did he maintain the reputation of the Telegraph Corps. He telegraphed Corse at Germantown and Hurlbut at Memphis, as directed by General Sherman, remaining in his office as long as possible. Much of the fighting occurred about the depot and train, which were captured. The line was repaired that evening, when Butler sent Captain Fuller, at Memphis, the following telegram:

Please send a relay and key. When the line was cut and they were making a charge on us, I took the instruments and all but the key was taken and a shell came through the office. I pulled the key loose and broke it; the relay was stepped on and broken in the fort. I got a shot through my left arm while shooting from the fort, but think I will not be laid up.

During the preceding February, while Grand Junction was threatened, W. H. Parsons, operating there, went to the fort and obtained a Springfield musket and forty rounds of ammunition, with which he took position by the soldiers, prepared to do what Butler did at Colliersville; but the enemy did not attack.

On the 16th of October, Generals Matthias, at Burnsville, and Osterhaus, at Iuka, both of Sherman's command, were very much in want of operators. Sherman telegraphed for two to accompany his advance, but especially asked for Wayne H. Parsons, who alone was sent. C. O. Whitney left Cam. Culbertson and Samuel D. Cochrane in charge of Iuka office, about this time, to accompany a Federal raid from Corinth.

Captain Fuller, some time in October, received the following despatch:

> The Secretary of War directs the immediate repair of line between Memphis and Cairo. Can you secure military escort and protection for working parties and repairers? Lose no time in opening line.
>
> (Signed) A. STAGER,
> *Colonel, Supt. U. S. Mil. Telegraphs.*

Generals Sherman, Hurlbut and Dodge agreed, however, that the line could not be maintained with the force in West Tennessee, and it was not undertaken.

Rebel General Forrest, who worked such harm to the corps north of Jackson, in December, 1862, reached Okolona, Miss., from Bragg's army besieging Chattanooga, in the middle of November, and organized another raid into West Tennessee, for the particular purpose of enforcing the conscription laws, and generally to do all possible injury to the Memphis and Charleston Railroad and telegraph, and to carry off as many animals as possible. General S. D. Lee was chief of cavalry in Mississippi, having under him Slemmons, McCulloch, Chalmers, and other brigadiers. Lee aided Forrest materially, although few if any of his troops accompanied the latter beyond the Memphis & Charleston road. At four, P. M., December 2, the telegraph was cut near Saulsbury, and after a short encounter the Federals were driven off and most of the town burned. The next day, another column, at 12: 30, P. M., cut the line east of La Fayette, and three hours later drove off the handful of troops there, and with them William A. Thayer and presumably his bride whom he had recently received from the North and married at Memphis. About the same time that LaFayette and Thayer's instruments were captured, the pickets at Colliersville were driven in, but the line was not cut. Moscow was attacked the same day; George E. Spellman operating there telegraphed to Memphis, at six, P.M., that the enemy had been driven off. Lee then retired south, and Forrest penetrated as far north as Jackson, ridding the country of many guerrillas by making them join his forces. On the return LaFayette was again captured, but this time Thayer saved his relay and register. A few months later, Captain Fuller wrote: "Forrest and Chalmers constantly harass our

lines, and generally succeed in cutting out and carrying off a quarter to a mile every week or ten days." Indeed, owing to Hurlbut's forwarding troops South and East, the matter of evacuating the posts from Memphis to Corinth was, early in November, seriously contemplated. These positions were, however, retained. Operators Egan, Ingle, Hughes, Stone and Olmstead were at Corinth, at this time, when not out with the cavalry on raiding expeditions.

As yet we have scarcely mentioned the telegraph affairs in Memphis. Very different were appearances there than in Cairo. The city, having a population of about thirty thousand, presented many evidences of thrift and culture. Its buildings were strikingly dissimilar, but not a few were imposing and architecturally pleasing. The finer structures were in the main named probably after their first owners: thus there were the "Ayers Building," "Jefferson Block," "Clay Building," "Gayoso Block" and "Irving Block," and the like. The telegraph office was in the "Telegraph Building," of which the entire third story and four front rooms of the second were seized for the United States Military Telegraph service. A restaurant was underneath. The building was located fronting the "Court Square," a beautiful little park, in the center of which, protected by an iron railing, was a bust of Jackson. The pedestal once bespoke his devotion to the Union in his own words: "The Federal Union, it must be preserved;" but some miscreant had nearly effaced the word "Federal." The park, surrounded by an iron fence, was tastefully designed. It was intersected by graveled walks, between which were handsome evergreens and numerous and various other ornamental trees. Besides, there were about thirty grand old oaks, much older than the city, and in them were numerous gray squirrels which little children delighted to feed. Truly, the Memphis telegraphers could say, "Our lines have fallen in pleasant places." Alvah S. Hawkins succeeded D. T. Bacon as manager, and so continued to act until he went to the office of General J. D. Webster, the efficient and talented Superintendent of military railroads in that department. The trains were run largely on telegraphic orders from Webster's office. A large number of the department operators served in the city office temporarily.

Captain Fuller made Memphis his head-quarters from about the first of February, 1863, having with him, as his chief clerk, W. L. Gross, from the Cairo office. Gross had been of invaluable aid to VanDuzer, who recommended his appointment as manager in the department. Captains Fuller and Bruch also spoke highly of him, and consequently he was made manager of the telegraphs under Bruch in General Burnside's department, with head-quarters in Danville, Ky. Before he left Memphis, many of the telegraphers united in the purchase of a gold hunting-case watch, which was presented to him at the dinner table. Pack, the colored cook who catered for the operators, had prepared a splendid repast. That finished, some Presbyterian ague cure that Captain Fuller was keeping for that or some other malarial occasion, was produced for "the stomach's sake." Gross supplemented the medicine by a basket of Longworth's Elixir of the Tower of Babel, as being best fitted to make lasting impressions. There sat at the table Major Benner and Lieutenant Dempster, of General Hurlbut's staff; operators S. D. Cochrane, who taught Gross to telegraph; R. S. Fowler, James Pitton, A. S. Hawkins, Lew. Spellman, W. D. Hawkins, William B. Somerville, Edward Fuller, Gross' successor; W. G. Fuller, Ed. Kenney, manager of the city office, and the wordy editor, Bingham, of the Memphis *Bulletin*. Touching speeches and glasses were followed by the delivery of the watch, on which was engraved "Presented to W. L. Gross as a token of esteem, from his friends in the United States Military Telegraph Corps, Department of Tennessee, Memphis, September, 1863. The strongest proof the author has discovered of there having followed a confusion of tongues, lies in the nature of the case and the incoherent report printed the next morning.

On the 27th of October, Mr. Fuller was appointed by the President, as captain and assistant quarter-master; whereupon another presentation was arranged, an account of which, taken from the *Bulletin* of the nineteenth, is as follows:

Last evening, the private rooms of the Military Telegraph Corps were the scene of a most genial incident. A little group of the friends of Captain W. G. Fuller assembled to the number of a score or more, and sat down to an elegant supper. This *recherche* repast did infinite honor to the *cuisine* of the Captain, and would be

difficult to excel. Game, oysters and all the delicacies of the season were served in a most tempting manner. After the claret had been removed and the champagne began to circulate, Mr. W. B. Somerville, a member of the Telegraph Corps, presented a beautiful gold watch to his chief, in a neat speech on behalf of his comrades and associates. His remarks consisted of a few sentences only, but they bore the distinguishing stamp of cordiality and good feeling, and in this is the secret of eloquence. * * Captain Fuller responded in a neat manner, winning a round of applause. A toast was drunk to General Hurlbut, the chairman of the occasion, to which he responded in a spirited, happy style, materially increasing the good humor of the evening.

The watch was a magnificent Jules Jurgensen chronometer, and bore the following inscription: "Presented to Captain W. G. Fuller, A. Q. M., U. S. A., and Superintendent of Military Telegraph, as a token of esteem, by the Telegraph Corps of the Department of the Tennessee."

Even Palmer did not escape the contagion, as shown, a little later, by another printed item:

Sol Palmer, the excellent foreman of the Military Telegraph construction party, was yesterday presented with a heavy silver hunter watch, purchased at a cost of $150, bearing the following inscription: "Presented to Solomon Palmer, Foreman of the U. S. Military Telegraph builders and repairers, as a token of esteem. Memphis, Tenn., Feb. 9, 1864." Captain W. G. Fuller added to the token a heavy silver guard chain. Sol is a worthy man, and we are glad he can carry these mementos of appreciation.

Besides the operators already mentioned in this department during the year 1863, there were Augustus Tyrrill, John R. Frank, H. J. Fish, E. B. McNairn, D. N. Stewart, C. W. McReynolds, Charles Wallace, William Gibson and K. B. Howe.

CHAPTER VI.

THE SIGNAL CORPS AND ITS EFFORTS TO CONTROL THE ELECTRIC FIELD TELEGRAPHS. — STANTON PRAISES THE U. S. M. T.

In a former chapter enough has been explained to show the purposes and, generally, the methods adopted in armies for signaling information or orders, without elaborating or particularly restating here. In a word, army signaling, as practiced at the outbreak of the rebellion, consisted of the "motion of a single flag, attached to a staff, held and worked by the hands of one man, in the day; or, by the similar motions of a lighted torch fastened to the staff, instead of a flag, at night; whereby, a single man is converted into a semaphore, useful for any distances at which the signs made are visible, either with the naked eye or with telescopes."

This branch of the service, when the war began, was rather experimental than otherwise, and like the army itself, had been neglected. Consequently, when McDowell advanced, in July, 1861, to fight the battle of Manassas, he had no field telegraph, visual or electric, and the only sign given or received was the signal gun, which announced that the attack should begin.

In June, the chief signal officer, Major Albert J. Myer, began organizing a small party at Fortress Monroe, for the signal service, and instructing them in the mysteries of the code. Other camps of instruction were subsequently established, but soon all were concentrated in the one at Georgetown, D. C. By November, 1861, a large party of detailed officers was instructed and attached to the Army of the Potomac, and, we are told, they at one time signaled from Georgetown, D. C., to Maryland Heights, *via* intermediate stations. At that time, such officers were much in demand, and as "other armies were formed or expeditions were prepared, skilled officers and men, sent from the parent camp, formed with these armies."

The signal officers so sent created a nucleus in the several de-

partments, which rapidly grew, so that the average number of officers on duty with the armies, for the year following October, 1862, was reported at one hundred and ninety-eight; but, perhaps, more impartially speaking, since there were two detailed soldiers with every officer, who did as much work, in quite as much danger, but without equal pay or notice, the average number of signal men was five hundred and ninety-four. That these enlisted assistants should be thus considered, follows from the official report for the year preceding October 30, 1863, which shows a loss during the year from wounds, capture and death by disease of sixteen officers and thirty-nine enlisted men, one of the latter having died from wounds. The succeeding year's report shows a loss of fourteen officers and sixty-two enlisted men, of whom one officer and five privates were killed. The corps increased with the armies; even recruiting stations were opened in various States. The expense of the service for the first three years of the war will best illustrate its growth. For the year ending June, 1862, that was $192,523.40; to the end of June, 1863, $545,612.64; and to the end of June, 1864, $848,584.00; a total in three years of $1,586,720.54; or, doubtless, over $2,000,000 before the war ceased.

That for this enormous expenditure much meritorious service was obtained, can not be gainsaid. Many, doubtless most, of its *attachés* were daring, skillful and useful. The author has a personal and pleasing recollection of some of them. Within the legitimate sphere of its service, this corps was probably as efficient as, considering its experience, it could be, and, judging from the laudatory reports of its chief, much more so than any other signal corps in any army in Europe. There does not appear to be anything improbable or unreasonable in this, because in every war improvements are made, and in ours they were manifest in every department.

Had its chief been content to leave telegraphing by wire to electricians, who, by the way, were in the field in and about Washington, Western Virginia and St. Louis, while the chief signal officer was journeying from the land of the Navajos, the telegraphic and signal corps would have vied with one another as mutual aids to a common purpose, quite as cheerfully as did the different arms of the army proper.

In no former war had the electric telegraph advanced with the army to any considerable extent. Telegraphy is an art for speedy communication; that was precisely the main purpose of the signal system, but it was so expensive as to be afforded, with few exceptions, only for national purposes. The really important messages, transmitted by the use of the flag, probably cost the Government many thousand dollars each. But it is not difficult to single out some such that well repaid their cost; and while eminent soldiers have spoken slightingly of the service as a whole, there are not wanting the certificates of numerous others to its efficiency. The good that it did will be preserved, for its chief, in his reports, which are most excellent, in many respects, seems to have striven to record only its benefits, and to direct attention to those officers whose usefulness gave him the items. One of those reports represents truly that,

As early as August 6, 1861, the Signal Officer of the Army proposed, with the permission of the Secretary of War, to organize a Telegraphic or Signal Train, to accompany the army on the march; the wagons of this train to carry all articles needed for temporary telegraphic uses; that is, apparatus and supplies for the use of both electric and aerial telegraphs, rockets and composition night-signals, carefully prepared, packed, numbered and arranged for instant use. Four flying field telegraphs were to be carried in the train, which was to be accompanied by, and be in charge of suitable officers and men, to each of whom his duties should be assigned, and of whom a proper proportion should be electric telegraphists, fully instructed in the use of the telescope and aerial signals; and who, employed for the war, should be sworn to the faithful discharge of their duties.

Major (now* General) Albert J. Myer meant by this that he wanted a "movable telegraphic train," equipped with instruments invented by Mr. G. W. Beardslee, of New York. "They work," said he, "without batteries, and can be used by any one who can read and write, after a day's practice." These instruments and Myer's insistence caused infinite trouble. The scheme was to monopolize army telegraphing by the use of frictional and dial telegraphy. In Major Myer's enthusiasm, even commercial telegraphing was threatened. It is not surprising that

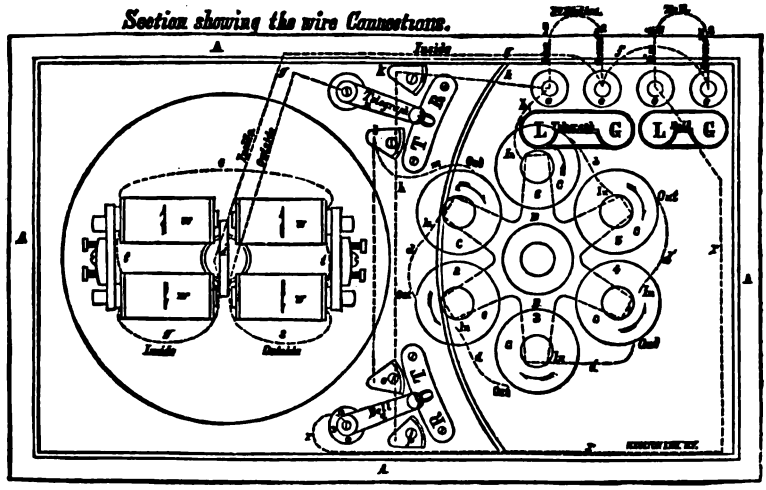
* This chapter was written while General Myer was alive.

his efforts were at first thwarted, nor that the Secretary of War gave non-committal replies to requests to organize such trains. Finally, one was obtained and taken to the Peninsula. It was in the neighborhood of the Chickahominy for about two months, to little purpose. Then "improved" machines were purchased. Congress legislated early in March, 1863, in behalf of the organization of the corps, and the War Department was more liberal in fostering the development of the system of field telegraphs, than had been requested, and Beardslee's experiments thus quickened resulted in the constructing also of "a sounder, by which the signals transmitted are addressed to the ear;" but it is believed these were only experimented with by the signal officers.

During the year ending June, 1863, there were thirty field frictional electric telegraph trains, which were distributed as follows:

In the Army of the Potomac,	5
In the Department of the Cumberland,	5
In the Department of the Gulf,	3
In the Department of North Carolina and Virginia,	3
In the Department of the South,	2
In the Department of the Tennessee,	6
In the Department of the Ohio,	2
At Signal Camp of Instruction, Georgetown, D. C.,	3
At U. S. Military Academy, West Point, N. Y.,	1
Total,	30

Concerning the working of the Beardslee instrument, the reports show at best but very indifferent success, even after Secretary Stanton had liberally supplied the corps with funds. It was not claimed as possible to work over twenty miles, and seldom attempted over five. If it operated at all five miles, the signalists were happy. Before proceeding with the disastrous history of this machine, it is best to explain it by reproducing the cut and the chief explanatory directions:



DIRECTIONS.

A, A, A, in the drawing, represents the box or case of the instrument ; B, the radiating magnet, which, with its radial points, is revolved beneath the spools, c, c, c, there being six poles, alternately, three north and three south poles. d, d, d, are the terminal wires of the magneto-spools, showing the manner in which they are connected together. The outside wire, m, of No. 1 spool, is connected with the lug l, of the telegraph switch, extending to the lug o, of the bell switch. The inside wire of the same spool is connected with the outside wire of the next spool, No. 2, and so on through the series of spools to No. 6, which has its inside wire, h, connected with the L hitcher, e, above the word telegraph, and extends to the lug, k, of the telegraph switch, and then to the lug, p, of the bell switch. w, w, w, represent the electro-magnet spools, whose terminal wires, t, t, t, are connected, throughout the series outside with an inside wire. The terminal outside wire, s, is connected with the telegraph switch, n, and the inside terminal, g, is connected with the G hitcher, e, over the word telegraph.

A^2 A^3 are the wires connecting with the hitchers, e, e, and extending to the second station or other instrument.

f, is a wire connecting G hitcher, e, over theword " Telegraph," with G hitcher, e, over the word " Bell."

r, is a wire which connects the bell switch with L hitcher, e, over the word " Bell."

d is a vibrating magnet between the cores of the electro-magnet spools.

The arrows indicate in what direction the wires of the several spools are wound.

B^1 B^2 are the wires connecting the bell spool with the hitchers, e, e (L and G), over the plate marked "Bell."

The bell and telegraph switches have each a plate with the letters T, for "transmit," O, for "open circuit," and R, to "receive" message.

The switches of all the instruments in a given circuit, when not in operation, have their telegraph switches placed over O, and the bell switch over R.

When a message is to be sent from either of the stations, the operator places his bell switch over T, makes one turn of the handle from the adjustment point of the dial to the same place and stops, and repeats this movement till the number of the station to which a message is to be sent is reached; he then places his bell switch over R, when the operator at the station called will place his switch over T, and repeat the call.

When this is done, the operators of all the instruments in the circuit will place their telegraph-switches over R, their bell-switches over O. The operator who made the call will then move his telegraph-switch over T, and proceed to transmit his message as before described.

The telegraph-machines are all numbered consecutively from one upward, and before leaving the factory they are all adjusted in the following manner, which must at all times be borne in mind, whenever the machines are taken apart and put together again.

In all machines marked with even numbers, the indicating handle being placed at the adjustment-stop at the left of the dial, the north poles of the radial magnet must be placed under the spools marked 1, 3, and 5, and in the machines marked with odd numbers, the indicating handle being at the same division of the dial, the north poles of the radial magnet should be under the spools marked 2, 4, and 6. In putting the machines together, this adjustment is readily effected by simply lifting the intermediate cog-wheel (which is between the driving-wheel and the one on the shaft of the radial magnets) and placing the indicating handle as stated, and turning the radial magnets until the poles are in the position stated, and then replacing the intermediate cog-wheel.

When a message is being transmitted from a station, the current is generated in the magneto-spools over the radiating magnet by the passage of the several radial poles of the magnet in close proximity to the ends of the cores of the several spools.

When the poles of the magnet are approaching and leaving the cores, magnetism is temporarily induced and discharged from the soft iron cores of the spools. This peculiar action in the soft iron induces electric impulses in the surrounding insulated coils of wire, which impulses are transmitted through the wires connecting the electro-magnetic spools of the instruments, and the lines connecting the stations.

The effect of these impulses of the electric current passing around the soft iron cores of the electro-magnets, induces magnetism in them, which causes the vibrating magnet to be attracted or repelled alternately in opposite directions, as the current is alternately reversed.

When the north poles of the magnet are passing spools Nos. 1, 3, and 5, and the south poles Nos. 2, 4, and 6, the current is in one and the same direction, with the power and strength of all the impulses of the six spools united.

When the reverse is the case, that is, when the south poles are passing where the north poles have just left, and the north poles where the south poles were, the current is induced in the opposite direction.

This change of direction causes the vibrating magnet to be alternately repelled and attracted in opposite directions, giving a pendulous motion to the magnet and pallets, which causes the needle to be moved around the dial, to indicate the letter intended, each impulse moving it the distance of one division of the dial.

When the instruments are in operation, the telegraph-switch of the receiving instrument being placed over R, the currents induced in the transmitting instrument are conducted along the wire h, through the hitcher L, e, and line wire A^2 to the receiving instrument, through the lug k, of that instrument, and the telegraph-switch n, along the wire s, through the electro-magnets, w, w, w, along the wire g, g, to the hitcher G, e, over "Telegraph," along the wire or ground A^2, to the same hitcher in the transmitting instrument, then along the wire g, g, through the electro-magnets w, w, w, and the wire s, and the switch n, the lug l, and the wire

m, through the magneto-spools back to the terminal wire h, of spool 6.

Thus it will be observed that the electric current passes from the generating instrument only through the electro-magnetic spools of the respective instruments, and does not follow through the bell-spools as they are switched open, nor through the magneto-spools of the receiving instruments as they are switched out of the circuit.

When the bells are operated, it will be observed that when the switches are placed as before described for that purpose, all the electro-magnetic spools are switched out, as well as the magneto-spools of the receiving and transmitting instruments.

If from any cause the spools of the electro-magnet require adjusting, this can be done by the set-screws and the holding-screws, but in no case should the ends of the cores be placed so near the range of vibration of the vibrating magnet as to permit it to come into contact with them, but so as to be just clear when the pallets are seated down in the escapement ratchet-wheel of the needle-shaft. Care should be taken to give the like adjustment to all the cores of the electro-magnets.

The instruments may all be moved from their cases by removing first the holding-hinge, then the velvet cover, the beads around the dial-top, then the six screws in the bottom of the box; care being taken, when replaced, that all is made tight and firm, and that no dirt or other matter is allowed to remain in case or instrument, and particularly no particles of iron are left in, or allowed to get in, as these will be attracted to the vibrating-magnet, and get between that and the cores of the spools, and prevent its vibrations, and thereby prevent the instrument from working.

It will be observed that the radial magnet-shaft rests in a step, which may be raised or lowered by a set-screw, which is then secured in place by a jamb-nut. This magnet should always be so adjusted as to revolve as near as possible to the ends of the cores of the magneto-spools without touching; and to prevent their being lifted into contact by the magnetic attraction, a set-screw is provided on top to hold it down, which will be required to be adjusted for that purpose, whenever it may be necessary to do so.

It is also important that whenever more than two instruments are placed in the same circuit, if it be desired that the messages

shall pass any given instrument or instruments, it or they can be closed out of the circuit by uniting the two hitchers, e, e, over the plate marked "Telegraph," by means of a wire.

In addition to the above, there were over seven pages of other explanatory print, showing, among other things, that each wagon contained one "machine," which, in use, should be on a level; a tool box, five reels of insulated wire, lances for poles, with one sharpened end and the other notched to receive the line; crowbars for ground connection, and if that was ineffectual or inconvenient, it was recommended that spikes be driven in trees, "and attaching the conducting wire to the spikes; or, instead, * * the bark may be cut off all around the tree and a copper wire wound around it."

In transmitting a message, which is done by moving the handle in succession to, and making a short pause at, the letters required to spell successively the words of a message, the operator, at the end of each word, must move the handle to, and make a short pause at, one of the stops, either to the right or left of the dial. To transmit a message, the switch must be at T. As soon as transmitted, the switch must be shifted to R, to be ready to receive a message, if one should be sent from the other station.

To transmit figures, the operator should first move the handle to the stop marked, "Stop for figures," at the top of the dial, then proceed the same as in sending letters, there being a circular row of figures, as well as letters, on the dial.

To facilitate transmission, the following abbreviations, and many others of like character, were used:

Aq.	All quiet.	Brig.	Brigade.
A.	After.	Cav.	Cavalry.
Art.	Artillery.	Com.	Communicate—tion
Adv.	Advance.	Cov.	Covered.
Ans.	Answer.	Co.	Company.
A. R. L.	Advance to reinforce our line.	Concl.	Conceal.
		C.	Can.
B.	Before.	Cld.	Could.
B. O.	The batteries are ours.	Cps. D. A.	Corps D. Army.
Bat.	Battery.	Chg.	Change.
Bag.	Baggage.	Comd.	Command.
Btn.	Between.	C. F.	Cease firing.
Bn.	Been.	C. R.	Cover the retreat.

C. F. B.	Cease firing on batteries.	Flk.	Flank.
Dir.	Direction.	F. O.	Fire over us.
Div.	Division.	F. L. L.	Fire a little to the left of last shot.
Eny.	Enemy.		
E. F.	Enemy are in front of us.	F. L. R.	Fire a little to the right of last shot.
E. R.	Enemy are retreating.		
E. A. L	Enemy are advancing on our left.	Gen.	General.
		G. A.	Good aim; your range is correct; keep it.
E. A. R.	Enemy are advancing on our right.		
		M. T. L.	Move troops to the left.
F. B.	Fall back.	R. N. H.	Reserve needed here; move forward to this point.
Far.	Farther.		
Ft.	Front.	Tps.	Troops.
Fwd.	Forward.	Val.	Valley.

Each train consisted of

5 miles vulcanized rubber insulated wire,
150 lances, 15 feet long,
50 lances, 18 feet long (6 x 12 feet), and

Two wagons, each containing

1 Beardslee's Patent Magneto-electric Field-telegraph machine (portfolio inside),
5 reels, with 4 small and one center reel stand,
25 notices and snaps,
4 bearers for carrying reels, with 3 straps,
2 galvanized crowbars with binding-screws for ground connection,
1 iron crowbar,
1 grease-pot and 1 pail,
2 lanterns,
2 poles with hook and fork, 18 feet long,
1 ax.

Tool box containing

3 spikes for ground connections in trees, etc.,
100 small iron spikes to hang wire on trees, etc.,
2 pounds No. 16 copper wire,
34-inch $\frac{3}{4}$ rubber sleeve to run the wire through the hand,
1 set climbing irons.

For making connections, joints and repairs:

10 insulated binding-screws, 10 feet rubber for joints, 1 flask rubber cement, 1 pound gutta percha in sheet, 12 sheets sandpaper, 1 spool No. 30, 1 spool No. 23 copper wire for making joints, 1 ball

twine, 1 pair cutting pliers, 1 screw wrench, (large), 1 do. (small), 1 screw-driver, 1 file, 1 machinist hammer, 1 hatchet, 1 pruning-knife, 1 auger, 1 saw, 1 oiler.

For soldering:

1 spirit-lamp with cap and shield, for melting solder, 1 bottle soldering acid, 1 soldering-iron, 2 bars solder.

Duplicate articles:

1 small gear, 1 linchpin and washer, 5 iron binding-screws, 10 iron washers (galvanized), 1 large gear, 2 iron rings for reel stands, 1 handle for reels.

Such was the complicated system worked after "one day's practice," to generate St. Vitus electricity; revolutionize Morse telegraphy, and drive Voltaic telegraphers from the field. That it was an expensive failure need be proved only to those unfamiliar with the science of electric telegraphy, but even electricians may be interested in some of the evidences of its *non*-success.

We are informed by the reports of the chief signal officer, that "at the first battle of Fredericksburg, field trains were, first in the history of the war, used on the battle field, under the fire of the enemy's batteries," but that is not unlike his report of seventy-six pages on the Peninsular campaign, in which he utterly ignores the military telegraph, which was there worked on the field of battle repeatedly. Of the Fredericksburg operations it was reported that "the trains in use contributed something to the success of these movements." "At Chancellorsville, several lines were extended. The shorter worked successfully. * * Success cannot always be commanded;" also that "these lines materially aided" the concentration of the army before Gettysburg, and were successfully employed at the siege of Charleston, S. C. Finally it is reported that the expense of "this service is trivial, compared with the results it is capable of accomplishing," and that with proper care it may be made "one of the cheapest, as well as effective branches of the service." Concerning its use at the battle of Fredericksburg, Samuel H. Edwards, late chief operator Atlantic & Pacific Telegraph Company, in New York, wrote:

During the engagement quite a rivalry arose between Myer's Field Telegraph and our (U. S. M. T.) system. DeWitte (W. K.) was at the pontoon crossing, I, in the woods an eighth of a mile back, with General Sedgwick. Myer's men were stationed, one by DeWitte at the pontoon, and one beside me at head-quarters. I asked him to give them fellows (Myer's men) a taste of what we could do, and he did. We beat them so badly that that one day's fight settled the Myer's system as far as General Sedgwick was concerned, and from that time, I never saw it in service during a battle.

Another operator, lately Superintendent of the New York Fire Alarm Telegraph, writing of affairs at the battle of Chancellorsville, says:

At that time winter quarters near Falmouth were in connection with head-quarters in the field, on the south side of the Rappahannock, near United States Ford. The Signal Corps people having put up the wire, and it being turned over to Morse men between these points, the Signal Corps people then extended the line further toward the front, to near Chancellor's house, where General Hooker remained during the battle. All business from Falmouth, where part of the staff remained, and from Sedgwick (Sixth Corps), who crossed at Fredericksburg lower down, came to James Murray and myself. We handed it to the Signal people for re-transmission. For the two days, business was very heavy, and A. Harper Caldwell and Jacques at Falmouth, sent it to us so rapidly that we handed the Signal folks as much every five minutes as they could transmit in an hour. We were obliged to send most of the messages to Hooker by orderlies; half a company being detailed for that purpose. The consequence was, the Commanding General and his subordinate commanders became totally disgusted at the inadequacy of the Beardslee telegraph, and it was immediately after turned over to our people.

Captain Buckley, Superintendent of the United States Military Telegraph in the Gulf Department, an accomplished and able officer, being, in the fall of 1863, asked to give his opinion, did it as follows:

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your communication with the enclosed "Beardslee's Military Telegraph" pamphlet. He commences by asserting that a portable telegraph has long been a *desideratum* which became more apparent during the

early stages of the Rebellion, and that the then known system of telegraphing was tried with indifferent success. Admitting this, we start from the same point, with the same facilities for establishing portable lines, but with the possession of a most perfect portable instrument in our favor. Galvanic batteries adapted to actual service in the field are not only possible, but accomplished facts. They are light, simple in construction, and can be transported on pack animals. In the Department of the Gulf, we have "soldier operators," and the "click of our instruments" has been heard and read by civilians "in the roar of cannon and the din of war," full as near the open batteries of Port Hudson as the most enthusiastic admirer of Beardslee's machine ever steadily manipulated his instrument. If the "enemy can connect with the wires of the Union lines" on poles, he can certainly connect more readily with those on the ground, or if "a telegraph station is taken by the enemy," the result would be the same whatever the instrument used. The statement that electric currents from our batteries "require very large conducting wire," can only deceive those unacquainted with telegraphing. Our smallest relay magnet wire, that is no larger than a horse hair, can be worked by our system ten times the distance that he can work one of any size.

It is a proved and established fact that magneto electric currents will not give the certain steady and continuous flow over long lines, that is produced by the galvanic current generated in a battery. Material for galvanic batteries is not necessarily "carried in glass or earthen vessels," but can be transported in "metallic vessels," or even in gunny bags. The most destructible material used in the construction of our field batteries, is sheet copper, and the "considerable supplies" would amount to one pound of material per day for a line of one hundred miles in length. If "officers or even soldiers from the ranks become expert operators with these instruments after a few hours practice;" to be without good operators must be inexcusable folly, hence the frequent errors in the transmission of their messages must result from imperfection of the instruments.

In the last movement of our army up the Bayou Teche, I was ordered to make New Iberia the end of our line. From this place Beardslee's instruments were used with the field wire eighteen miles in length, towards Vermillionville, which they worked in two circuits of nine miles each. The errors in the messages transmitted were so frequent and annoying that we were obliged to send

mounted orderlies with all given them. At Port Hudson these instruments were so inefficient and their performance so unsatisfactory, that Major General Banks gave me orders to take and work their wire of three and one-half miles in length, which we connected with our own camp lines and worked to the end of the siege. Major Myer, signal officer, in his communication, states that there is "occasional liability of going to the next letter to the one intended."

The train in the Department of the Gulf, for which they made requisition over the Opelousas Railroad for transportation, consisted of twelve wagons, thirty-eight mules, thirteen horses, fifty-two enlisted men and ten teamsters, with eighteen miles of wire, of which the parties in charge informed me. Our force, which has not been exceeded, consists of fifty-two white men, including operators at twenty-three stations, thirteen negroes, four horses, ten mules, two army wagons and one ambulance, with five hundred and ten miles of line now working. Our lines have been generally kept up with the advance, giving the other system but little opportunity to display the superiority claimed.

In the field before Port Hudson, the Commanding General had an operator at his side who was connected with important points throughout the whole extent of our lines. We are using the same field wire as the Beardslee system, with as much ability to establish lines rapidly. Our perfect instruments are less than two pounds in weight, and their reliability is proved by the success of the Morse telegraph during the past fifteen years. Our whole working apparatus is light, simple in construction, and certain in its operations.

The evidences of the unreliability of the Beardslee machine were fast accumulating, and coming, usually, from sources that could not be charged with partiality, they had great weight. Here was an emergency, and the Chief Signal Officer aimed to meet it by employing and commissioning telegraphists. Among those thus engaged were D. Wilmot Smith and John Thomas. As explanatory of Major Myer's purposes, Mr. Smith writes:

About the last of October, 1863, I received an invitation from the Signal Service to come to Washington and be examined for a commission in that branch of the service. On my arrival there, I learned that it was proposed to try and have the Military Telegraph combined with the Signal Service, and under its control and direc-

tion. It was proposed, if I passed examination, that a number of operators throughout the country should be carefully selected, examined, commissioned, and a Military Telegraph organized as part of the Signal Service. I had been telegraphing since 1850; for several years superintendent of lines; had built lines, and was extensively acquainted with operators throughout the country. I was to receive the first commission, and thereupon enter upon the organization of the department and invite operators of known ability to join.

Mr. Thomas' evidence is to the same purport:

I called upon Colonel Myer and had a very pleasant interview. I passed examination successfully. Colonel Myer requested me to remain at the Signal camp on Georgetown Heights, for a time, and make a thorough examination of the telegraphic apparatus. * * I examined the wires, instruments, etc., of the Signal Corps, and speedily settled it in my own mind that, to do effective work, some skilled telegraph operators and Morse instruments were needed.

Of course the facts concerning the inefficiency of the Signal Corps' electric apparatus and of the efforts to make amends by the employment of Morse operators, soon came to the knowledge of Colonel Stager, who saw in the latter move all the evil consequences, if persisted in, that he expressed in the following recommendatory communication to the Secretary of War:

HEAD-QUARTERS U. S. MILITARY TELEGRAPH,
Washington, D. C., October 27, 1863.

HON. EDWIN M. STANTON,
Secretary of War.

SIR: In consequence of the embarrassment already experienced and the complications likely to arise from the organizing of Field Telegraphs by the Signal Corps, I beg leave to submit for your consideration the propriety of placing the Field Telegraphs under the immediate direction of the Military Telegraph Department, and thus avoid the existence of two organizations in the same grade of service. This change can be made without material loss of time, and will not in my opinion impair the operations of the Field Telegraph, but will be made more efficient in the hands of expert telegraphers. It will also relieve a large number of inexperienced men now employed for this work by the Signal Corps. The Military Telegraph Department can successfully operate the field and mili-

tary electric telegraph in conjunction, using telegraph experts for both as occasion may require, and without detriment to any other branch of the public service, and at a considerable reduction of expense in the working force and machinery required for the two organizations.

The Field Telegraph of the Signal Corps is at present operated by men unacquainted with the practical working of the electric telegraph, and it has failed to meet the requirements of the military authorities. On several occasions where the emergency called for its use, the Commanding General directed the operators of the military telegraph to take possession of the field telegraph wire and operate the same, which was done with entire success, and this, too, after the Signal Corps had repeatedly failed to transmit with accuracy or promptness the important despatches entrusted to it. To overcome these failures and to make the Field Telegraph a feature of the Signal Corps, it has become necessary for it to adopt a system which requires the practical experience of military telegraphers, and the Signal Corps is now making efforts to secure the best electricians in the service by offers of rank and increased pay, which it is enabled to do through its military organization, an advantage not possessed by the Military Telegraph Department.

Two distinct organizations, employing the same machinery, the same class of experts and operating in the same Military Department, can not be conducted without clashing and confusion, nor without doubling the expense necessary for the performance of the telegraphic service. I, therefore, respectfully recommend that the management of all field and military electric telegraphs be confined to the organization known as the United States Military Telegraph Department, or, that that Department be abolished, and the whole business placed under the control of the Signal Corps.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant, ANSON STAGER,
Col. and Supt. U. S. M. T.

From this excellent statement of the case, it would seem that but one intelligent conclusion could be reached, and Mr. Stanton, having arrived at that, with his usual promptness, did not hesitate, by an original and two amendatory orders, to promulgate his judgment, which forever placed electrical operations in the management of electricians who had dearly won his confidence.

WAR DEPARTMENT, ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE,
Washington City, November 10, 1863.

SPECIAL ORDER 499, *Extract* 20.

Colonel A. J. Myer, Signal Officer United States Army, is hereby relieved from duty in charge of the Bureau of the Signal Corps, and will repair without delay to Memphis, Tenn., reporting his arrival there by letter to the Adjutant General of the Army. He will turn over his office to the next officer in rank of the Signal Corps. All magneto-electric field signal trains and apparatus will be turned over to Colonel A. Stager, Superintendent United States Military Telegraphs, to whom all officers on duty with the same will at once report by letter at this place.

November 13, Special Order 502, Extract 30.— Paragraph 20, Special Orders, No. 499, of November 10, from this office, is amended in its last sentence, as follows: Major Nicodemus, Signal Corps, will turn over all property, trains and apparatus, belonging to the Magneto-electric Field Telegraph Signal Trains, to Colonel A. Stager, Superintendent Military Telegraphs.

By order of the Secretary of War. E. D. TOWNSEND,
Assistant Adjutant General.

Special order No. five hundred and four, extract twenty-nine, further amends four hundred and ninety-nine, by requiring "all officers and enlisted men now on duty with the Signal trains," to report for "temporary duty, to Colonel A. Stager," and on "being relieved from duty," they "will report to the commanding officer of the Signal corps." Thereupon, in the Department of the Gulf, ninety officers and men, fifteen wagons, forty horses, forty mules, twenty-one saddles, nineteen bridles, twenty-eight revolvers, and "*about twenty miles of field wire*," and large quantities of harness, tools, camp equipage, etc., were turned over to Captain Bulkley of the United States Military Telegraph Corps.

Having now the whole field, and the grave responsibilities which expectation and field requirements imposed, Colonel Stager, February 23, 1864, issued a circular order to his assistants, from which the following is extracted:

The object in changing the supervision of the Field Telegraph from the Signal Corps to that of the United States Military Telegraph, was to make the Field Telegraph a more efficient and useful

branch of the military service, by placing it in the hands of expert telegraphers. Such officers as are now in charge of field telegraph trains, must see that they are organized in the best possible manner for spring operations. There should be no delay in this respect. It is designed to use the Caton or pocket, or field instrument; to use number fourteen wire for the field, and to have the wire and batteries carried by pack mules, the wire to be run off from reel on the mule, and the batteries to be worked, as they are packed, from the backs of the mules. Small screw insulators are to be used in putting up field lines, instead of lances, as far as may be possible. These insulators can be taken down very readily. Officers must organize their trains, ascertain how many miles of wire, number of screw insulators, pack saddles, reels, cups, battery, etc., they will require for field service, and make proper requisition. Do not let a want of interest or energy in this matter reflect discredit upon the Military Telegraph.

The United States Military Telegraph Department never used the Beardslee machine. What finally became of those (about forty) owned by the Government, may safely be left to conjecture. It was hinted about Washington that Colonel Myer was seeking recourse to Congress, but if so it is believed it was not pressed. There was a time (about December, 1863) when Secretary Stanton seriously contemplated giving Major Eckert, of the Telegraph Department, the command of the Signal Corps, with rank of Colonel, but it blew over. Such is the history of the electric telegraph operations of the Signal Corps, of its surrender of its adopted calling, and of the assumption by the Telegraph Department of the responsibilities incident to such relinquishment, and the manner, in the main, in which that work was henceforth to be carried forward.

It seems most fitting to close this chapter with quotations from the Report of the Secretary of War, made to the President of the United States, December 5, 1863, and by him submitted to the first session of the Thirty-Eighth Federal Congress touching the services of these two branches of the military service.

The Signal Corps was organized under an Act of the last Congress. The average number of *officers** on duty is reported as one

* Ita ics by author.

hundred and ninety-eight. The full capacity of this branch of the service has not yet been developed, and different opinions as to its value seem to be entertained by commanding officers. In combined land and naval operations it has been considered useful, and commanding officers of Western armies have commended it with favor. The continuance of the corps is recommended by this Department, with proper restrictions upon the number of officers, and limiting them to their proper scope of duties.

The Military Telegraph, under the general direction of Colonel Stager and Major Eckert, ** has been of inestimable value to the service, and no corps has surpassed, few have equaled, the telegraph operators in diligence and devotion to their duties.* From the Superintendent's report, it appears that the military telegraph lines required by the Government have been constructed over an extensive and scattered territory, embracing the District of Columbia, parts of the States of Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Maryland, Delaware, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Arkansas, Tennessee, Kentucky, Missouri, Kansas, and the Indian Territory. Under the immediate direction of Major Eckert, assistant superintendent of the Department of the Potomac, three hundred miles have been constructed during the year. Under the direction of Captain Smith, assistant superintendent of the Department of the Missouri, five hundred and forty-eight miles have been constructed during the year, one mile of which was submarine. Under the direction of Captain Bruch, assistant superintendent of the Department of the Ohio, Cumberland and Mississippi, five hundred and ten miles have been constructed during the year. Under Captain David, assistant superintendent of the Department of West Virginia, ninety-seven miles have been constructed during the same period. Under the direction of Captain Bulkley, assistant superintendent of the Department of the Gulf, three hundred miles have been built, one mile of which was submarine. On the first day of July, 1862, there were three thousand, five hundred and seventy-one miles of land and submarine lines in working order. During the fiscal year, one thousand, seven hundred and fifty-five miles of land and submarine lines were constructed, making a total number of miles of land and submarine military telegraph lines in operation during the year, five thousand, three hundred and twenty-six, being length of line sufficient to girdle more than one-fifth of the circumference of the globe. By a

*Italics by author.

close estimate, it appears that at least one million, two hundred thousand telegrams have been sent and received over the military lines in operation during the fiscal year ending June 30, 1863, being at the rate of about three thousand three hundred per diem. These messages have varied in length from ten to one thousand words and upwards, and generally were of an urgent or important character.

CHAPTER VII.

THE *STATUS* OF FEDERAL AND CONFEDERATE OPERATORS AND THEIR SALARIES.

The position of the National military telegraphers was vexatiously anomalous. They were neither citizen nor military, and yet they were both. This paradoxical statement which explains nothing, may seem unwarranted, but the truth remains that such a contradiction of facts existed. In the Northern armies as in the Southern, the operators were chiefly *non*-commissioned. The exceptions, which were rare, were where officers of not exceeding the rank of captain, were detailed at their request. A very large number of operators were detached from the ranks. Probably every general in the army made such details for temporary service, and until a permanent release could come from the War Department. Some operators like Charles G. Eddy, were detailed against their wish, and compelled for some time to serve at soldier's pay. Eddy thus worked one year for thirteen dollars per month, and perhaps forty cents per day extra, by the side of others, who not having enlisted, were paid seventy dollars and upward. Yet others, like W. H. Woodring and J. B. Morgan, serving in Missouri, were deprived of all bounty because they had not served the required term as "soldiers," notwithstanding they were detailed because they were more useful as telegraphers. Some soldiers were discharged absolutely from the army to enable them to serve as operators. Among these, Milton H. Bassett, Charles I. Fancher, F. H. Bassett and S. S. Ulmer, in the Department of the Gulf, discharged August 17, 1863, contracted in writing, on receipt of their discharges, to serve the Government to the end of the term of their enlistment, at the rate of forty dollars per month, but even that was better than James C. Denny and some other soldier operators received, for they obtained a private's pay. Over one hundred and fifty operators and a large number of repair-

men were permanently detailed by the War Department, from the army, to enter the telegraph service.

With few exceptions, soldier-operators were glad to escape the duties of a private, corporal or sergeant for the responsibilities and labors of the army telegrapher, which, while being better remunerated as a rule, were far less monotonous. These soldier-operators, having been disciplined to obedience, and experienced the *ennui*, not to say worse, of camp life, to which they might at any time be returned if disobedient, were usually more reliable than those who could resign at pleasure and enter the service elsewhere or engage with any of the private companies in the free States. The privilege of resigning was always accorded civilian operators as well as officers of the army, but any attempt to quit in a body would not be tolerated on the part of either.

The urgent necessity for operators was felt very early in the war, and, as many entered the armies as soldiers or officers, and new offices were opened, the want of expert telegraphers became very great; even experienced line-men were becoming scarce. Consequently, as early as August, 1862, Colonel Stager successfully represented the evil consequences to result if these were to be subject to conscription. The Secretary of War, thereupon, issued the following order, which was telegraphed by the Associated Press all over the country:

WAR DEPARTMENT, Washington, August 5, 1862

ORDERED:

That, the use of the telegraph lines being required for military purposes, all persons actually employed in constructing and operating telegraph lines, at the date of the order calling for three hundred thousand men, be exempt from military duty so long as they remain in such service.

By order of the President.

(Signed) EDWIN M. STANTON,
Secretary of War.

Although it is believed this was never modified, yet in subsequent drafts it sometimes happened that the marshals included the names of operators. Doubtless, these could have secured immunity therefrom, had they in apt time claimed exemption

under the order of the President; but this, some at least appear not to have been advised of. Thus operators *while actually engaged in the Federal service, in exposed parts of the theater of the war*, were actually enrolled for draft, and some drew the prize (?). Telegraphists in the corps at Little Rock, Arkansas, Vicksburg, Mississippi, and perhaps other advance points, were thus enrolled, and some in the Department of Missouri were actually forced to proceed to conscript camps for muster in the army. These proceedings reflected greater disgrace upon the service than anything else during the war, and it is to be regretted that telegraphers did not at that time insist upon the exemption of their drafted co-laborers, irrespective of the foregoing order and on the sole ground of the military service they were in when conscripted. It was the opportune moment for an understanding. A volunteer soldier would have resented enrollment for draft in unmistakable terms. An operator who had been detailed from the ranks, because of the greater need of his services as telegrapher, would have felt equally indignant; why should not a *volunteer* operator, for whom and whose, no bounty or pension laws were ever passed? Conscripts were not looked upon with much favor in the army. To draft one was to say to him, "If you will not serve your country in this hour of its peril, we will make you." A Federal operator ought to have been allowed to reply, "I am serving my country." Duncan T. Bacon, who was drafted in New York, took the proper course when he insisted on an exemption from enrollment on the ground that, as an operator, he had already served in the army. This is the only instance of the kind that has come to my knowledge, and it is pleasing to note that the officers of the Government credited him with his service the same as if he had been mustered in as a soldier.

Captain Fuller was officially advised that Federal operators from Ohio were entitled to vote with the soldiers, because they were "in the actual military service of the United States."

There is always a certain amount of looseness in matters of rule and routine in armies, during actual war, and hence, *all* operators were not required to take the telegrapher's oath, but nearly all did take it, and it was Colonel Stager's direction that all should. No harm ever came from any omission, however.

These oaths were mainly formulated by the department superintendents, one of which is as follows:

I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will bear true allegiance to the United States of America, and that I will support and sustain the Constitution and laws made in pursuance thereof, as the supreme law of the land, anything in any State Constitution or laws to the contrary notwithstanding. That I will not take up arms against the United States, or give aid and comfort to the enemies thereof, or to any authority or pretended authority that is or may hereafter be engaged in armed hostility thereto; and that I disclaim all fellowship with the so-called Confederate States and Confederate armies.

I do further swear that I will not reveal to any person or persons the contents of any despatch, report or other communication, either directly or indirectly, that may come to my knowledge through my connection with the telegraph, in any manner whatever. That I will not reveal or divulge to any person or persons any cipher that may be given me for United States military purposes; and that I will faithfully keep and observe this my solemn oath of secrecy and allegiance to the Government of the United States of America.

Subscribed and sworn to by.....
Before me, this.....day of.....186

More complaint has been uttered by telegraphers on account of their anomalous position in the service, and its consequent evils, than all other causes united. Performing tasks of extreme responsibility and delicacy—tasks that required extraordinary care and diligence and such skill and confidence as only comes from long practice at the key—the Federal military operator was but a citizen, and in most departments so dressed, although surrounded by all the trappings of war and located at the headquarters of its "pomp and circumstance." Intellectually, at his age, he had few superiors. His bravery was so splendid that the rare exceptions were overwhelmed by the multitude of heroic acts he performed. It is unnecessary to compare the importance of his work with the grand service of brave officers, for they concede it. *No other service was so confided in.* The secret of a contemplated movement of a large army is a great trust. Mr. Shanks, a newspaper reporter, whose business it was to "worm

out" interesting items by all the recognized arts of the profession, wrote that the operator was "generally considered proof against fevers of excitement."

A commission, it is true, was not needed to give authority, nor was it extremely essential as promoting discipline, but it was warranted by the service, and might at least have been given as a fitting reward of merit. When Mr. Stager recommended an organization of the Telegraph Department, the statesmen, North and South, believed the war would cease within six months; wherefore the problem was, how to serve the country under the laws as they stood, rather than to organize, by virtue of special legislation to be had, a corps theretofore unknown. We have seen that, in the plan recommended, it was not contemplated that any body, not even the chief, should be commissioned, but that, upon his appointment, it appearing necessary, to protect the Quarter-master General, Mr. Stager was made Captain and Assistant Quarter-master at the suggestion of General Meigs. The other original appointments that followed long after were to secure Colonel Stager, not to reward anybody, though the appointees deserved it; nor to enhance discipline in the service, but as a protection to the Chief in advancing large sums of Government money, and to facilitate business with local quarter-masters. Operators never found fault with these appointments, but rather rejoiced in them. The *gravamen* of their complaint lay in this, that they were as patriotic and serviceable as army men, and yet oft-times treated as mere civilians, although doing purely military duty, and in the conduct of their work, officers of little rank not infrequently by disparaging remark or conduct induced generally by jealousy, made them quite sensitive and dissatisfied. To remedy some of these petty ills, it was proposed by operators in the West, to obtain authority to wear a uniform, without distinctive marks representing rank, a thing probably quite as strange in an army as was the indefinite position they occupied. General Thomas was requested to authorize the wearing of the uniform agreed upon, which he cheerfully did as follows:

HEAD-QUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF THE CUMBERLAND,
Chattanooga, Tenn., March 26, 1864.

GENERAL ORDER No. 51.

The Telegraph Operators in this Department are hereby author-

ized to wear an undress uniform, described as follows: Blouse, dark blue; trousers, dark blue cloth, with silver cord one-eighth of an inch in diameter along the outer seam; vest, buff, white, or blue; forage cap, like that worn by commissioned officers, but without any distinctive mark or ornament; buttons, like those worn by officers of the general staff.

By command of Major General Thomas.

W. D. WHIPPLE, *Asst. Adjt. Gen.*

July 5, 1864, General McPherson, commanding the Department of the Tennessee, issued a like order, except that it authorized wearing a small silver cord around the cap band.

Thus dressed, the operators were regarded as officers by all not personally acquainted, and the result was highly gratifying for a time. One evil result was that about the time they obtained their new uniform, which was very pretty, they took to homesickness. A short visit, or slight delay, restored contentment. It was extremely amusing at times to note the embarrassment of officers and soldiers in their vain efforts to recognize operators by their proper rank. To err complimentarily, if mistake they must, they often gave operators much higher rank than they ever aspired to. This occurred the more often because they rode with the General's staff, and, being in the *best* company in the army, even a colonelcy was sometimes vouchsafed these knights of the key and professors of mysterious ciphers, who were not even "high privates." While this state of things was novel, it was entertaining; but in time too many knew that the operators were in borrowed plumage, and, although loaned by high authority, it began to seem like "putting on airs." Field operators, however, found it necessary to continue wearing the uniform, but many post operators discarded theirs, to avoid embarrassing questions, such as "What is your rank?" What regiment do you belong to?" and the like.

For these and other reasons, the question of commissions broke out afresh and with renewed energy. In the Department of the Cumberland, Captain VanDuzer, who always writes vigorously, wrote to his superior, Captain Bruch, as follows:

Our men don't belong to anybody when in the field. They have no recognized *status*, and every officer, of whatever grade, who happens to command a post where an office is maintained, has to be

taught that the operator is not a servant—not subject to his (the officer's) orders in regard to his duties. Another trouble, and that no small one in practice, though it may seem so in a complaint, is the manner in which operators are too often treated, with regard to quarters and messing arrangements. I have had an operator (a gentleman, too), whom I had sent to the head-quarters of a Major General, in the field, assigned to the quarters and mess of the orderlies, very cavalierly informed that the "other messes were full." One of my best cipher men, attached to a general, in eminent command, was forbidden by a staff quarter-master to ride in the car with the staff, and ordered to ride with the servants. I am glad to say that the order was disobeyed by my man, and revoked by the chief of staff. I laugh at these annoyances when I hear of them, and, by making light of them, keep the men from taking them up seriously, but they have a very depressing effect upon the service, I assure you. I am not asked to suggest a remedy, but as I am volunteering the complaints, I may as well proffer one, and that is, to give us a thorough military organization. Make operators officers, cadets, second and first lieutenants.*

Captain Bruch referred this to Colonel Stager, endorsing it as follows:

I would earnestly request that the matter be laid before the Secretary of War, and that some system be adopted which will enable us to keep good operators in the military telegraph service, and which will secure us from the many abuses which operators are at present forced to submit to from superior officers in the army, who are not in the telegraph service.

Prior to this, Captain Bruch had, in an annual report, recommended the consolidation of the Telegraph Department with the Signal Corps; but which organization should control, and how operators were to be affected, was left to be inferred. Captain Fuller, about the same time (September, 1863), in his report, said:

In my opinion, the efficiency of the Telegraph Corps would be improved by giving the operators a *status* in the army, affixing a severe penalty for desertion of duty or malfeasance. Their duties are very confining, giving them but little opportunity to provide for their personal wants, and more definite instructions to commanding officers to provide suitable quarters for offices located at outpost stations, should be given. In several instances, my opera-

* Assistant Superintendents were but captains then.

tors have been denied messing privileges with the officers and been compelled to beg the privilege of messing with the private soldiers. These instances have been the exceptions, however. Officers, generally, have treated us with courtesy and respect.

Some time anterior to these and other like communications from other officials, the operators in the Department of the Potomac united in the following petition to Colonel Stager:

WASHINGTON, D. C., Dec. 3, 1862

COLONEL ANSON STAGER,

General Superintendent U. S. Military Telegraphs, Washington, D. C.:

DEAR SIR: The undersigned operators, employed in the United States Military Telegraph Department, respectfully submit to your consideration the following: The Honorable Secretary of War, in his late report to the President, says, in reference to the Telegraph Corps, "*In diligence, fidelity and important aid, they have been unsurpassed by any branch of the service.*" You are, no doubt, aware that the operators have performed the more important part of these duties under your supervision, overcoming great difficulties and doing service under disadvantages never before experienced in American telegraphy; yet, as you know, we are but poorly remunerated for these important services, especially when compared with other branches of the public service. For instance, clerks in the Quarter-master, Commissary, or any other department, ever so unimportant, have received but seldom less than seventy-five dollars per month, while the majority have over one hundred. Telegraph operators have but sixty dollars, and that under the disadvantage of often changing quarters and paying high prices for everything. While we are ready, as heretofore, to use all means in our power to perform our duties, we are also compelled to call your attention to the steady advancing prices of all necessaries of life, and that with the compensation now allowed us it will soon be impossible to respectably maintain our position. While most of the employés of the Government in work-shops, navy yards, arsenals and also employés in private establishments, have successfully demanded an increase of wages for their services, on this account we have forborne to do so until now, when we think the present session of Congress presents an opportunity for you to recommend a *telegraphic organization* similar to the Engineer Corps or other branches of public service, and be remunerated according to the value of our services. We appeal to you as our "head," and trust

to your magnanimity to devise means to comply with our request. We beg you to transmit a copy of this to the Secretary of War.

(Signed) Very respectfully yours,

Jos. Schnell, Jr.,	C. W. Jacques,	M. Y. Holly,
Geo. W. Nail,	Frank Drummond,	P. H. Nunan,
R. Cunningham,	A. H. Bliss,	Thos. Morrison,
J. H. Nichols,	F. T. Bickford,	Silas C. Burns,
Albert W. Orton,	John Winthrup,	W. N. Embree,
G. J. Lawrence,	C. W. Moore,	R. O'Brien,
T. H. Fonda,	R. F. Weitbrecht,	Thos. E. Moreland,
W. H. Eckman,	H. C. Buell,	J. H. Glazier,
E. Rosewatbr,	Edward F. Chapman,	J. W. Parsons,
John Allen,	Henry W. Cowan,	J. H. Bunnell,
Henry H. Matlock,	C. H. Lounsberry,	A. H. Kanode,
John S. Kerbey,	H. P. Royce,	J. W. Sampson,
Richard Graham,	Charles I. Brown,	J. O'Brien,
Edward Conway,	Geo. E. Cromwell,	C. L. Snyder,
Geo. Garland,	M. V. B. Buell,	J. H. Emerick,
F. Lamb,	O. H. Dorrence,	Chas. R. Roberts,
W. K. De Witte,	Thomas N. Loucks,	W. G. Baldwin,
J. L. Cherry,	R. H. Ryan,	D. McCarty,
Wm. C. Hall,	W. F. Holloway.	

It is true that the subject of salaries embraces the major part of this petition, but that was because it seemed to be the only point requiring argument. Owing to representations like these, and corroborating observations made by Colonel Stager and Major Eckert, those gentlemen, accompanied by P. H. Watson, Assistant Secretary of War, had an audience with Mr. Stanton on the subject of a more perfect organization, whereby operators would be commissioned and remunerated according to their respective deserts. The Secretary listened to reasons adduced and then said that he was well satisfied with the present efficiency of the service; that he did not want the operators commissioned, because that would only enable every superior officer to command them; a result he was most anxious to avoid. Of course, the Secretary being unconvinced, his views prevailed, but had he and President Lincoln lived, there is no doubt ample honors would have been accorded the operator at the close of the war.

Several officers endeavored to obtain commissions and staff appointments for their operators. Among these was General Burnside, who tried hard to have his operators, Jacques and Johns, commissioned and assigned to his staff.

The salaries of operators were raised from time to time, so that at the close of the war they were paid from seventy-five to

one hundred and fifty dollars per month and were well provided with horses, wagons, tents, fuel, rations, servants, etc.

It is believed that but one strike was attempted among Union military operators, and that was at a time in the Department of the Ohio when even the highest salaries would have been a poor recompense for dwelling in the poorly protected and benighted sections of Kentucky and East Tennessee, where most of the complaining operators were located. The fact that they *could* resign and leave such lonesome positions favored their unrest. The further fact that they were regarded as mere civilians was also disquieting. So they presented this petition:

DEPARTMENT OF THE OHIO,
January 17, 1864.

W. L. GROSS,
Captain and Assistant Superintendent Military Telegraphs, Danville, Ky.:

WHEREAS, we, the telegraph operators in the military service in the Department of the Ohio, having a more important and laborious duty to perform than most any other branch of the military service, and our present salary does not sufficiently compensate us for the many inconveniences, too numerous to mention, under which we labor, therefore, *Resolved*, first, that we, the undersigned, telegraph operators in the military service of the United States, at work in the Department of the Ohio, hereby solemnly affirm that we will not and can not possibly work for less than one hundred dollars per month. *Resolved*, second, that we ask to be immediately relieved unless our request is complied with. *Resolved*, third, that we sincerely hope it will meet with the approval of our Superintendent.

(Signed)

J. F. WILBER,	operator,	Barboursville, Ky.,
J. R. BROWN,	"	Barboursville, Ky.,
J. G. GOALDING,	"	Cumberland Gap,
GEORGE PURDON,	"	Tazewell, Tenn.,
W. T. STRUBBE,	"	Tazewell, Tenn.,
JOE ANDERSON,	"	Strawberry Plains, Tenn.,
GEORGE COLE,	"	Loudon, Tenn.,
G. D. WILKINSON,	"	Knoxville, Tenn.,
G. JONES,	"	Mossy Creek, Tenn.,
W. H. SISSON,	"	East Tennessee,
SAM ROBERTS	"	East Tennessee,
T. M. SAMPSON,	"	Crab Orchard, Ky.,
T. G. HARVEY,	"	Stanford, Ky.,
J. M. SPENCER,	"	Lexington, Ky.,
J. W. CURTISS,	"	Mt. Sterling, Ky.,
A. W. HOWELL,	"	Somerset, Ky.,
JOHN NAGLE,	"	Mt. Vernon, Ky.,
JOE H. GILKERSON,	"	Columbia, Ky.,
F. BENNER,	"	Danville, Ky.

This petition was referred to Captain Bruch without comment, and likewise by him to Colonel Stager, who returned it with this endorsement, dated January 30, 1864:

> Communications bearing the letter and spirit of the one returned herewith, will not be entertained and can be looked upon in no other light than as a conspiracy by the parties, against the Government. The resignation of these individuals will be accepted singly, whenever you are able to supply their places. If operators or employés attempt to quit the service in combined bodies, they shall be put under military arrest and held as conspirators. Operators will be paid salaries according to the grade of their competency, as per authority given you in my letter of January 28, 1864.

In that letter, Colonel Stager stated that if there were any competent operators in the service who were paid fifty, sixty or seventy dollars per month, and whose services were worth more to the Government in such capacity, their pay might be increased according to the grade of their competency. "Please ascertain who originated the 'strike.'" The story of this attempted strike is almost ended without its beginning—so short is it. The idea of being treated as conspirators brought the boys to their senses, and right or wrong in their demands, they saw that the course adopted was the worst conceivable, in a land held by armies which depended so largely on the telegraph. Whether Colonel Stager's letter *ante*-dating but two days his endorsement, was in anticipation of the petition I know not, but whether fortuitous or studied, it worked well, and many of the operators did find it "possible" to live for less than one hundred dollars per month, although none who have tried it there would do it again, except for the "cause."

The recital of the foregoing affair is a reminder of a much more interesting and elaborate experiment across the "bloody chasm." Southern telegraphers had for some time prior to the organization of the "Southern Telegraphic Association," been smarting under grievous wrongs which they, true to the style of the "Declaration of Independence," recounted in the Preamble adopted by them in Augusta, Ga., October 26, 1863. Chief among the evils therein complained of, were these: * * "Our

rights have not been respected by the various telegraph companies, and they have recently used the conscript law of the Confederate States as a means to intimidate us to succumb to demands we consider unfair and tyrannical." We are "required to enter on duty at seven or eight A. M., and are never off until ten P. M., and often kept on till two to five A. M., without extra compensation, * * also * * to work on the Sabbath from the hours of eight to ten A. M., and from seven to nine P. M." Our "salaries are entirely inadequate to defray the expenses of living in the simplest manner;" we claim "as an inalienable right, the privilege of resigning our positions on one line, to accept one on another; and denounce and will resist any attempt to prevent members of this association from changing their employers, either by a refusal to accept their resignations, conscripting or ordering them to their commands *in transit*, as unjust and illegal, as shown in the late decision of his Honor, Judge MaGrath, in South Carolina." This association was regularly organized in all respects. Its chief officers were, a President, a Senior Vice President, one Junior Vice President from each State, a Secretary and Treasurer. The organizers were Charles A. Gaston, of Mobile, J. Sisson Clarke, of Charleston, Charles F. Barnes, of Augusta, E. J. Saville, of Mobile, W. H. Clarke, of Savannah, William Sandford, of Mobile, J. W. Kates, of the military lines about Charleston, W. A. McMurchy and perhaps some others.

This society, in the terms of its organic laws, probably took a bolder stand against capital than any other similar telegraphic association in this country. It undertook to obtain lists "of the operators in their respective States; their salaries; where stationed;" to interdict its members from working "in any office requiring more than one operator, unless the other operators in such office are members of this Association;" to prohibit students from acquiring the art unless they obtained leave from the President and paid the association one hundred dollars, more or less, at that officer's discretion, and agreed to join the association when qualified; "to sustain as far as may be right, its members in all difficulties" with employers; to arrogate to itself obedience as against "any order, emanating from whatever source, which shall conflict with its constitution or by-laws," and in case such

obedience, in spite of conflicting orders from employers, works injury to the telegrapher, every operator on the line whereon he served was to be directed to "immediately cease sending or receiving" commercial business. It also arranged the following schedule of working hours, viz: from October 1, to April 1, 8:30 A. M., to 8 P. M.; April 1, to October 1, 8 A. M., to 7:30 P. M.; Sundays, 8:30 A. M., to 9:30 A. M., and 6 to 7 P. M.; same for holidays, and no private business to be done on the Sabbath. When the Government exigencies required longer hours, the companies should pay at the rate of fifty cents per hour therefor, and finally it sought to "maintain a rate of compensation." As the Southern Telegraph Company, of which Doctor W. S. Morris was President, was said to be the chief instrument of oppression, so the membership of this association, which was very large, was obtained principally from the employés of that company, and by virtue thereof, such of its members were extremely gratulant and confident.

At this time operators' salaries in the Confederacy, ranged about five hundred dollars per month. One would think they ought to have been contented, but they lived so extravagantly that their board cost four hundred dollars per month; their elegant cow-hide boots, two hundred dollars per pair, and their tasteful and *real* American home spun suits, seven hundred dollars. Other essentials in proportion. It was a rare era in that land when everything but money was a luxury.

President Charles A. Gaston, confidential operator with General Lee, issued an excellent address to "all managers of telegraph offices and telegraph operators in the Confederate States," exhorting co-operation. In that address, we note the following, which deserves to be preserved, and is therefore here inserted: "There is no agency known to society that so fully challenges the confidence of man. It is entrusted with every one's secrets, and employed in the furtherance of every one's concerns, no matter whether public or private, trivial or momentous." Doctor Morris did not long hesitate before ordering all employés to withdraw from the Association, or be dismissed. As a dismissal would leave the operators liable to do military duty, and that as conscripts and among strange regiments, a dilemma was at once presented, but notwithstanding, the Acting President (Gaston

being with the army) retaliated by forbidding members from receiving or transmitting any telegrams, except such as were on government, railroad, or express business. Thus an issue was fairly made. A dead lock ensued, lasting a week or ten days. Operators were dismissed, and for a time working operators were as scarce in the large offices as during the great strike on the Western Union lines, in 1870, when business was refused by the managers. The name of every discharged operator was sent to the conscript officer in his vicinity, and, it is said, in some cases a guard entered offices and escorted the operators to camp, where they earned seventeen dollars per month, musty bacon and sour corn meal, as conscripts. But this state of things could not last. The Confederacy had not operators enough to make soldiers of them in large numbers, and it was soon evident that Doctor Morris could obtain their detail, and thus *compel* them to serve at soldiers' pay. It was this, more than being forced into the army, that put a *quietus* on the strike. Most of the operators returned to duty. It was the first and last strike in the Confederacy, and it was also the end of the Southern Telegraphic Association.

Two other organizations took root later in the war, and died much more innocently. These were the "South-western Telegraphic Association," and the "Confederate States Telegraphic Club." The former, started by E. J. Saville, Geo. W. Trabue, John B. Morris and E. H. Hogshead, was born in Meridian, Miss., May 1, 1864. Its purposes were merely mutually beneficial in a general way, with no thought of antagonizing any thing or body, for the operators and officers of the South-western (C. S.) constituted a model happy family, in which mutual confidence, esteem and courtesy prevailed. The following were its members: E. L. Marchant, operator at Jackson, Miss.; J. H. Henderson, at Grenada; G. B. McMurchy, at Meridian; John B. Morris, at Corinth; Geo. W. Trabue, at Mobile, Ala.; E. H. Hogshead, at Meridian; E. J. Saville, at Mobile, Ala.; E. Howard, at Meridian; F. C. Whitthorne, with Forrest's Cavalry; Geo. M. Dugan; M. Flippen, at Brandon; Charles St. John, at Brandon; A. M. Record, at Morton; W. H. Young, at Buckatunna; C. I. DePew, at Citronelle; E. Garaudy, at Enterprise; James M. Osborn, military operator; George W.

Beard, at Canton; Thomas F. Marshall, at Grenada; E. A. Fulda, at Jackson; John A. Galbreath, Jr., at Jackson; Wm. A. L'Hommedieu, at Jackson; A. G. McN. Russell, at Jackson; N. C. David, at Oxford; B. W. Collier, at Oxford; C. W. Montgomery, military service; L. T. Lindsey, military service; M. W. Barr, military service.

At the first annual meeting a quorum was wanting, notwithstanding the efforts of its president, the lamented and talented John B. Morris, ably seconded by E. H. Hogshead, the secretary.

The "Club" was of Charleston (S. C.) origin, and was formed January 9, 1865. The constitution and by-laws of the "Southwestern," somewhat modified, were adopted, and T. M. Bryan elected President, E. N. Woodhouse, Vice President, John D. Harbers, Secretary, Samuel S. Turner, Treasurer. The three Directors were W. D. S. Anderson, J. D. Westerveldt and R. H. Pegues. This also died while teething.

A number of Confederate operators were commissioned and held staff appointments. When the civil telegraph force proved insufficient, these officers assisted. They usually accompanied the cavalry leaders, with a view in part to tapping Union wires; but others went with infantry columns, doing telegraphing incidentally only, When General Hood advanced against Thomas, at Nashville, it was reported by a captured Confederate operator, that *Major* M. William Barr was chief of the telegraphic operations conducted for Hood's army; that William Allen accompanied the cavalry under General Wheeler; J. M. Powers, that under General Roddy; and Whitthorne, that under General Forrest. There were other army operators, some of whom were commissioned. These made telegraphing but an adjunct to their other duties, and were not carried on the rolls as operators. Southern telegraphers were subordinated to a greater extent than Union operators, to the direction of army officers, for the reason that there was no cohesion in the telegraph branch of the Confederate service—no general head—at best, only department chiefs, and they, it is believed, never reported to the War or Postal Departments, in Richmond, but only to the officer commanding the District. Some of them at least were obliged to take an oath of fealty, but how generally this was practiced, we have

not inquired. To a considerable extent, they were excepted from the rigors of conscription. Even in those dark days of the Confederacy, when its armies were fast crumbling by desertion, disease and the bullet, we find that the telegraphists were exempted from actual service; but this immunity seems to have resulted from a wise discretion, rather than by virtue of any positive enactment, in which respect it accorded with the conduct of the national authorities. General Withers, commanding the Reserves, with head-quarters in Montgomery, Ala., ordered all, or nearly all, of the operators in Alabama, to join the forces in camp, and, in excuse for so doing, wrote that "the Secretary of War decides that all able-bodied men shall be put into the army." Lieutenant General Richard Taylor, foreseeing that such measures would isolate him from his Department, telegraphed as follows:

SELMA, ALA., November 10, 1864.

To HON. SECRETARY OF WAR, Richmond, Va.:

Please authorize Major General Withers, commanding conscripts and reserves in Alabama, by telegraph, to use that discretion which General Kemper has been permitted to use, in Virginia, relative to sending to camp all telegraphers and steamboat men. Unless this is done immediately, he will literally execute his orders, the effect of which will be to stop all telegraphs and steamboats in this Department, and work great inconvenience and perhaps disaster to the service. Please reply by telegraph. Respectfully,

R. TAYLOR, *Lieut. Gen.*

In Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia, the Secretary of War permitted the generals of reserves to exercise a proper discretion in the matter of taking telegraph operators from their offices. In some cases they were detailed and returned to duty in their offices. In Virginia, no details were issued, but in lieu thereof was the following, a copy of which each Southern operator received:

HEAD-QUARTERS RESERVE FORCES OF VIRGINIA,
Richmond, October 5, 1864.

Telegraph operators will not be interfered with under the orders for organizing the local forces of the State. By order of Major General Kemper. R. H. CATLETT, *A. A. G.*

General Taylor's request was granted so far, at least, as operators were concerned.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE TELEGRAPH IN EASTERN VIRGINIA FROM JULY, 1863, TO JULY, 1864.—SAVED FROM EXECUTION BY TELEGRAPHIC REPRIEVES.—MOVEMENTS OF THE ARMIES OF THE POTOMAC AND JAMES.—WILDERNESS.—SPOTTSYLVANIA.—COLD HARBOR.—PETERSBURG.

General Meade's army was not destined to remain long about the banks of the Potomac. July 19 and 20, 1863, it crossed near Berlin, Maryland, and immediately moved to Gainsville, Virginia. But the telegraph was extended, on the eighteenth, from Berlin to Lovettsville, where the General had his head-quarters. This office was worked, until the twentieth, by operators Caldwell, Emerick and Rose, Pierce having left on the sixteenth, for a short time. After a five days ride over a beautiful country, during which they enjoyed the splendid blackberries that abound there, and the excellent repasts that the superintendent of construction, D. Doren, foraged, the head-quarters operators having reached Warrenton were, thanks to the energy of Eckert's linemen, enabled once more to communicate direct with the War Department office. Within a few days, the army reached the line of the Orange & Alexandria Railroad, and two wires were kept in constant working order from Washington to the front, one being used exclusively for military and the other for railroad business. Besides these, other lines were built from General Meade's to all the corps and some of the division head-quarters. They proved to be of very great value to the army, keeping all its parts in quick communication with each other and with the National capital. In August, L. A. Rose (and C. Douglass from the eighteenth) operated at the head-quarters of the Second Corps at Morrisville; H. W. Cowan and W. C. Hall, at Bealeton; J. H. Glazier, J. D. Flynn and E. A. Hall, at Manassas Junction; D. E. Rand, at Burkes Station; R. H. Brigham, at Centreville; J. D. Tinney and A. H. Bliss, at Rappahannock

Station; R. F. Weitbrecht and W. H. Shreffler, at Kelley's Ford; R. R. McCain and J. A. Murray, at Hartwood; R. H. Ryan, at Warrenton; S. H. Edwards and R. Graham, at Warrenton Junction; and W. D. Wood and F. N. Benson, at Fairfax Station. Messrs. Bates, Tinker, Chandler, McCarty, Orten, Kanode, Morrison, Burns, Safford, Barron, Nail, Nichols, Dwight, Loucks, Moreland, Kettels, Ney and C. L. Snyder were variously stationed in Washington, and Dorrence, Maiden, Power, Flack and Garland in Alexandria offices.

It was about this time that sentence of death was to be executed upon a soldier charged with desertion. His case had been submitted to the tender-hearted President, who granted a pardon, a few hours only prior to the time when the soldier was to be executed. But before the President's message could be sent, telegraphic communication was interrupted. O. H. Dorrence, chief of the railroad operators at Alexandria, took the despatch by special train to the break in the line west of Burkes Station and telegraphed it just in time to stay the execution of the soldier.

Similar occurrences are by no means unknown. Mr. Shaffner, in his "Telegraph Manual," relates with thrilling particularity how he succeeded, while in St Louis, Mo., in obtaining from President Millard Fillmore, in 1851, a telegraphic respite in behalf of a young Indian, who, to save his aged father from an ignoble death for a murder the parent was innocent of, had confessed himself guilty of the dreadful crime, of which he also was guiltless, and being convicted, mainly on that confession, was on his way to the scaffold when the order suspending the sentence, which reached St. Louis by three telegraphic routes, was placed in the hands of the marshal, at Jefferson City, Mo.

In the early part of the war the Confederate military authorities at Knoxville, Tenn., convicted an East Tennesseean of bridge-burning, for which he was sentenced to be hung at two o'clock in the afternoon of a certain day. On the morning of the fatal day, a daughter of the condemned man telegraphed from Knoxville, to President Davis, at Richmond, beseeching him in pitiful terms to have mercy on her father, and save him from the terrible doom fast approaching. D. E. Norris forwarded the message to Lynchburg, where it was relayed to Richmond,

by operator S——, at half past nine, A. M. About noon, "Rd" (Richmond) called "Bg" (Lynchburg), saying: "Here it is! Rush it through." S—— hurried with it to the Western instrument, called "Kd" (Knoxville) twice, and was answered, but before the reprieve could be told, the operator at Dublin Depot put on his ground wire, thereby practically severing the line, only one end of which ran to his instrument; that unfortunately was the western end, and the purpose doubtless was to enable the Dublin operator to dispose of his telegraph business westward without interruption from Eastern operators. Perhaps he had to receive important train orders, after which he probably forgot that his ground wire was on. At any rate, S—— remained at his instrument until fifteen minutes before the time for the execution of the condemned, growing more and more nervous as each moment passed, and when the last flickering ray of hope was about to expire, the ground wire was removed, when S—— quickly called Knoxville. He answered. Davis' message, staying the execution, was rapidly transmitted, but Norris said he feared it was too late, as the officers of the law had left the jail with the prisoner sometime before. However, the message was received in time, and the father was ultimately restored to his affectionate child.

Another instance: During General Hunter's raid through the valley of Viginia, two private soldiers—substitutes—exhausted by long marches and scant food, left behind, fell into the enemy's hands. It is related that, after being captured they were heavily ironed and closely guarded for some days; that the Confederates, to prevail upon them to enter their armies, threatened them with death unless they joined the Confederate service—a dread *ultimatum*, which induced acceptance in the secret hope of escaping. They accompanied the command of the notorious Harry Gilmore, in a raid upon the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad, and were captured by the Federals and taken to Harpers Ferry in irons. There they were recognized, accused of bounty-jumping, desertion and bearing arms against the Government. Appearances were all against them, and though they told a consistent story as above related, it was disbelieved, and they were sentenced to be shot. The day preceding the time fixed for the execution, a Catholic Chaplain heard the prisoners' story and the corroborat-

ive statements of a rebel prisoner, whose evidence was not heard by the court martial, whereupon Father F——, the priest, telegraphed the President his understanding of the case, and asked mercy for the prisoners. D. J. Ludwig, operator at the Ferry, anxiously awaited for eighteen hours a reply from the President, but at daylight all the wires to Washington and Baltimore were down. At noon they were yet as still as death. No current could be "tasted." The prisoners had but one hour yet to live. Sadly and anxiously Ludwig sat adjusting his instrument for the slightest current. He saw the procession pass by, in which were the condemned, sitting upon their coffins. He heard the band play the "Dead March," but though his hope waned, his vigilance did not relax. At ten o'clock that forenoon, W. D. Gentry, operator in Baltimore City office, received a telegraphic reprieve for the condemned men, who were eighty miles away. Feeling the trying responsibility thrust upon him, Gentry tried every means then known to telegraphy to raise Harpers Ferry office, but was unsuccessful. At a quarter past twelve he heard the armature of the magnet on that line splutter as if somebody was at work with two ends of the wire; an instant more the lever of the sounder fell with a heavy click, and before Gentry could make "H. F." twice, Ludwig answered and received the respite and dispatched his mounted orderly therewith before stopping to give O K to Gentry. The place fixed for the execution was some two miles away, on the heights beyond the little village of Bolivar, and the road for nearly a mile extended up the side of a mountain. The orderly lost no time, but whipped his horse into his fastest gait, and maintained it to the end. As he approached the party having the dread work in hand, and discovered the soldiers who were to fire, were getting into position, the orderly, yet several hundred yards away, redoubled his exertions to urge his horse, which, when within a few yards of the prisoners, gave out and fell to the ground, *dead*. His coming was however, heard by the soldiers, who stood awaiting the signal to fire. They rested their guns, and the doomed men were saved.

The army having left the neighborhood of the Potomac, operator Douglass, at Poolesville, Md., was in constant danger of being carried off by guerrillas from the Virginia side. But

Douglass, accustomed to take such chances—for it was here that he, Weitbrecht and the repairer held councils of war nearly every night during the Gettysburg campaign, and Cherry had had numerous adventures—had become less nervous than formerly. About midnight, however, Aug. 16, the enemy came and found Douglass in bed. They took the telegraph instrument and mounted the operator behind one of his captors. The guerrillas broke open store doors and Douglass assisted in stowing goods into the bags the rebels had brought. They soon became so deeply interested in their work, that the operator, keenly intent on escaping, was enabled quietly to pass out and enter an adjoining corn-field, where he remained until the raiders left town, after which he returned to his office; connected the wires and went to bed again.

After several Federal cavalry incursions, one of which resulted in the re-capture of two gun-boats in the Rappahannock, a part of the army about the middle of September, advanced to the Rapidan, and the rest to the neighborhood of Culpeper Court House. W. C. Hall and Rose, with General Warren, opened an office at that place in the brick building just vacated by the rebel operators, and Meade's telegraphists, reinforced by James Caldwell, were located in Wallach's house, half a mile from the village. Other offices were opened at the front.

Meade was about to cross the Rapidan with his whole force, when he was directed, notwithstanding his protests, to detach the Eleventh and Twelfth Corps, from his army in aid of the troops at Chattanooga, whither Lee had previously sent Longstreet's corps, but being reinforced in October, Meade would have advanced, had not Lee already begun moving on his right with the intention of getting position between the capital and the Union army. This move was foiled by Meade's rapid retreat, in consequence of which, Lee again fell back, destroying the railroad and telegraphs. During this retrograde movement, the telegraph performed an important part, keeping Meade constantly informed of the position of his forces and transmitting intelligence of the enemy as the same was obtained. An animated telegraphic discussion between Generals Halleck and Meade followed the retirement of Lee; Meade proposing to possess the heights of Fredericksburg with his army. So sharp was

this correspondence, that a change of commanders by Meade's desire, was seriously proposed, but it was averted and he continued in command of the army of the Potomac to the end of the war.

October 19, when the Union forces again started toward Culpeper, the telegraph was actively employed. Doren was indefatigable in his efforts to construct the lines. On the twenty-first, head-quarters' office was open at Warrenton, and on the twenty-third, the Second Corps at Turkey Run was connected. At 10:30 P. M., the twenty-fourth, Emerick placed French (Third Corps) in the circuit at Catletts. Shreffler and Glazier relieved Emerick the twenty-sixth, and head-quarters being moved to Auburn, he kept the Sixth Corps at Warrenton in communication until the twenty-eighth, when Ryan and Edwards relieved him. While Edwards and escort were *en route* to this place, they were attacked by bushwhackers and some of the party injured. On the thirty-first, an office was opened at Bealeton for Generals Buford and French; the day before, for the Third Corps at Licking Run; the 8th of November, at Rappahannock Station and Kelley's Ford; the tenth, at Brandy's Station and on the twelfth, once more at Culpeper Court House.

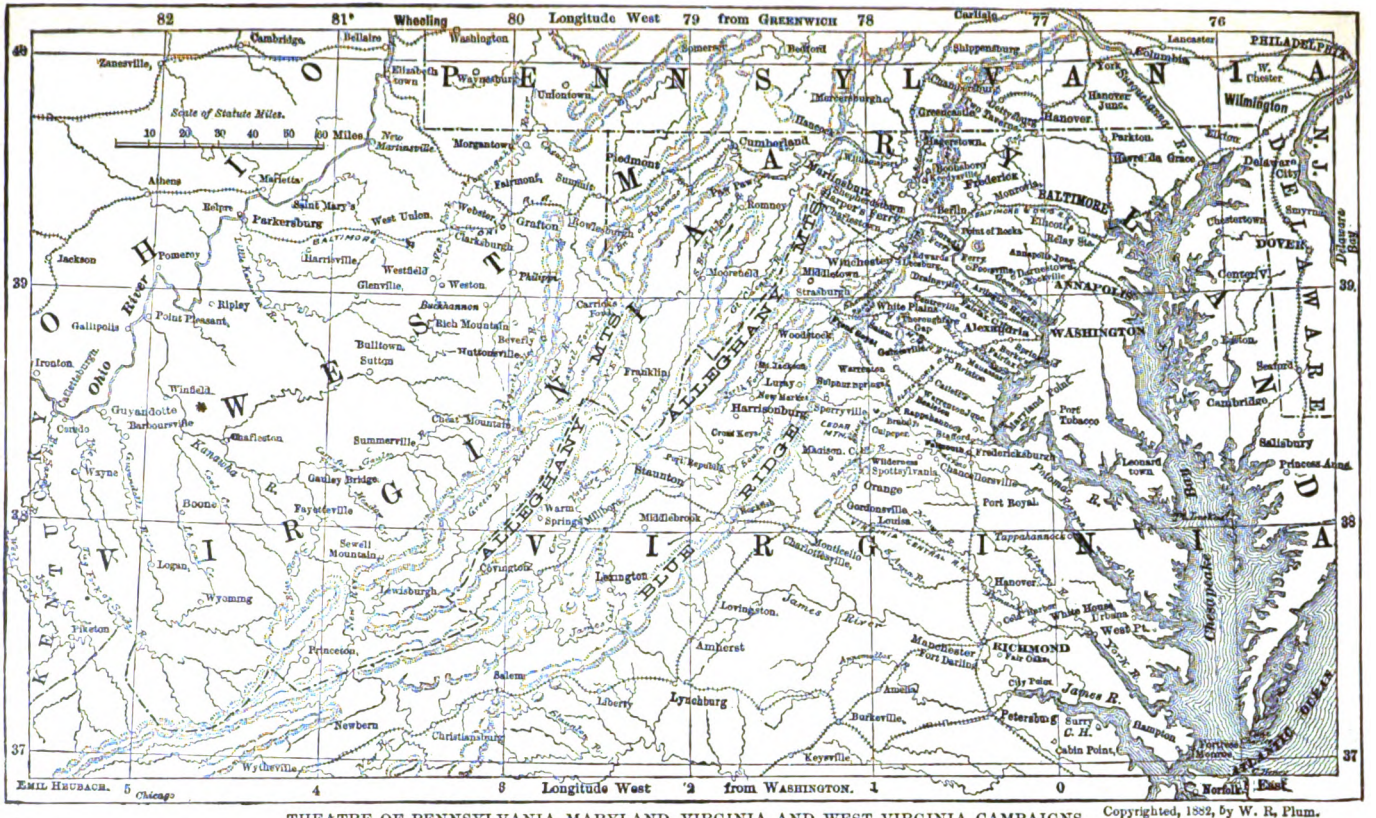
November 26, everything being in readiness, Meade's army crossed the Rapidan at Germania, Culpeper and Ely's Fords and Jacob's Mill, and on the twenty-eighth, the Union army lay in front of the enemy's position. Meade was in telegraphic communication with Washington and, by field telegraph, with both wings of his army. It was arranged on the twenty-ninth, that Warren was to attack the enemy's right, but not doing so, he was, on the thirtieth, ordered by telegraph to do it. Warren however, replied that the enemy's position was too strong to be assaulted, and protested against the useless loss of life in attempting to carry it, whereupon Meade, who had given the order upon previous representations, examined the position in person and annulled the command. Such had been the disposition of the forces, that further efforts to dislodge the enemy at that time, were deemed unwise, and hence the army retraced its steps across the Rapidan. The losses were probably one thousand men on each side.

Some of the operators at the front, notably W. C. Hall and

Rose, by this time found it necessary, on account of the gray-backs which infested their blankets and clothing, to go to Washington to renovate and make purchases; but the Spanish itch, which broke out in some of the camps, and particularly at Bealeton, was infinitely more disagreeable. Operators Edwards and E. A. Hall, at this place, found it a distressing subject of frequent jest. The disease appeared on the fingers and every part of the person that was clothed. The body was covered with running sores. At first, physicians said it was caused by salt meats, and ordered an *anti*-scorbutic diet. Later, the doctors declared it was a blood disorder, and directed free applications of sulphur and lard, used as a salve; but, to use the language of another, the "insects fattened on the pomade," thus necessitating a trip to Washington.

There was a long *interim* between Gettysburg and the Wilderness, which was now impending. The War Department had manifested marked vigilance. Throughout the fall and winter of 1863–4, the energies of all departments were strained to place the military power upon an irresistible footing. On the second day of March, Ulysses S. Grant was confirmed as Lieutenant General and Commander, under the President, of all of the armies in the field. He determined to make his head-quarters with General Meade's army, and to inaugurate, about the 1st of May, co-operative movements of all the armies against a common enemy. Consequently, the telegraph was of infinite importance to the Commander, who, from his tent in Virginia, was to move his men upon the great continental chess-board of war understandingly. But once during the ensuing struggle did he go to any other of his commands. Badeau, in his "Military History of U. S. Grant," says (p. 41, vol. 2):

> From this spot (Culpeper), Grant issued his orders to all the soldiers of the Republic. Hither came to him reports from Banks, on the Red River, and from Sherman, at Chattanooga; from Butler, at Fort Monroe, and from Sigel, in West Virginia. His staff officers were sent to all these generals, to carry instructions that could not so well be given in writing; and the telegraph, that revolutionizer of modern war, brought him despatches daily of the doings of his armies a thousand miles away.



THEATRE OF PENNSYLVANIA, MARYLAND, VIRGINIA AND WEST VIRGINIA CAMPAIGNS.

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February 27, Custer's cavalry, fifteen hundred strong, moved to the west of Lee's army, *via* Madison C. H., to near Charlottsville, with the view chiefly of distracting the enemy's attention from Kilpatrick's cavalry movements, looking to the liberation of Federal prisoners in Libby. Forces from Fort Monroe were started to co-operate on the Peninsula; but the only success of the raid consisted in the capture of about five hundred of the enemy and destruction of railroad bridges, military stores, etc. Kilpatrick's cavalry, less one hundred and fifty men lost, including Colonel Ulric Dahlgren killed, returned by water, *via* Fort Monroe. Operator James A. Murray accompanied Kilpatrick, mainly for the purpose of stealing information from the enemy's wires. He had an interesting and eventful experience.

In March, 1864, by direction of Secretary Stanton, a telegraph line was being built from Washington, D. C., *via* Port Tobacco, to the new depot for rebel prisoners of war, at Point Lookout, Md., and offices were to be opened at those places and St. Mary's, the head-quarters of the Potomac flotilla, and at Leonardstown. The use of this line proved of immense advantage to the Government in the coming campaign.

We have seen that the Beardslee Field Telegraph System, under the control of the Signal Service, was supplanted by the Morse Telegraph, under the general management of Colonel Stager. Major Eckert, in contemplation of the spring campaign of the Army of the Potomac, constructed an apparatus for speedily paying out fine telegraph wire, which consisted of reels fitted to pack saddles borne by mules; each reel carrying one mile of wire. The construction party, organized, was under the immediate supervision of D. Doren, and all the field operators were subject to the orders of A. Harper Caldwell, chief operator at Meade's head-quarters. The electric current for charging the wires was supplied by a portable battery, consisting of sixteen sections, of six cells each. The cells were made of copper, about four inches in diameter, by nine in depth, and contained blue vitriol in solution. In the liquid was placed a leather cup, one-half of the diameter of the copper, containing a zinc plate and water. Each cell was insulated by a casing of thin sheet rubber, and fitted on the top was a bone-rubber cap, thus making the cells water-tight. Each section was enclosed in a

strong box, and the whole securely packed in a common army wagon, which also carried a quantity of blue vitriol, the only article except water necessary to replenish the battery and keep it in working order. The operator's table, instruments, tools, battery, etc., were placed in one wagon, thus making a complete telegraphic outfit in one conveyance, sufficient for working any requisite number of lines at a moment's notice.

On the night of May 3, the Army of the Potomac, numbering 97,273, crossed the Rapidan at Ely's, Germania and Culpeper fords, and advanced to the vicinity of Chancellorsville, where the battle of the Wilderness occurred. Meade's army was reinforced by Burnside's corps, exceeding twenty-two thousand men, who took part in the battle.

There were at Meade's head-quarters, for the campaign now opening, operators A. H. and J. Caldwell and Emerick; at Warren's, Edwards, George Henderson and E. A. Hall; at Hancock's, Rose and Shreffler, besides whom was operator C. H. Beckwith, whose duties consisted chiefly of cipher work for General Grant.

Co-operating with the Army of the Potomac, were General Butler's forces, at and near Gloucester Point, Va., about thirty thousand men; General Sigel's, in the Valley of Virginia, of about ten thousand; and Cook and Averill, in West Virginia, about eight thousand, while Sherman, in Northern Georgia, was co-operating to the extent that he was enabled to keep the forces in his front from reinforcing Grant's immediate adversary, Lee. Writing of the position of affairs just after crossing the Rapidan, Badeau says:

> Meade's head-quarters were near those of the General in Chief, and at night the two commanders discussed the plans of the morrow. While they were thus engaged, telegrams arrived, announcing that Sherman and Butler and Crook had all advanced. It had never happened before, in the history of war, that one man directed so completely four distinct armies, separated by thousands of miles and numbering more than a quarter of a million soldiers, ordering the operations of each for the same day, and receiving at night reports from each that his orders had been obeyed.

It will be recollected that a telegraph line was constructed to

Fortress Monroe, through Maryland, and by cable across the Chesapeake, and thence to Yorktown, for McClellan's Peninsular operations. This line, continued in use to Fort Magruder, was extended from Yorktown to General Butler's, at Gloucester Point, where, to deceive the enemy as to his real objective, his forces were mainly stationed, awaiting the order of the Lieutenant General. With General Butler were chief operator Richard O'Brien, and J. Hervey Nichols and J. W. Collings, assistants. The latter was detailed from the ranks, and sent in June to the army of the Potomac. Other operators were stationed in this vicinity, as follows: At Fort Monroe, chief, George D. Sheldon, John A. Sheridan, C. L. Snyder and Silas C. Burns; at Newport News, F. B. Knight; at head-quarters near Portsmouth, Wilbur F. Halloway; at Norfolk, John E. O'Brien; at Fort Magruder, Robert J. Murphy; at Yorktown, H. N. Snow.

As soon as General Butler received his telegraphic orders to move, he embarked his forces, consisting mainly of the Eighteenth Corps, General W. F. Smith, and the Tenth, General Gilmore; the latter from South Carolina, and landed at Wilson's Wharf, Fort Powhatan and City Point, immediately possessing Bermuda Hundred in force. On the seventh, the Petersburg & Richmond Railway was struck, and the enemy met in some force. Two days later, a larger force broke the railway and advanced to within three miles of Petersburg.

As the Confederates were wholly unprepared, without the Confederate telegraph system connecting Richmond, Lee's army, Lynchburg, Savannah and the Carolinas, it would have been utterly and unqualifiedly impossible to defend Petersburg; but messages couched in hot words spread the feverish anxieties of the defenders, the momentous importance of the issue and the cries for help. Assistance came as rapidly as possible from all quarters, especially Beauregard's command from the South, by reason of which and incorrect reports that the Army of the Potomac had won a great victory, Butler turned his forces northward to within ten miles of the Confederate capital, where he was met by the enemy in strong position and force.

As soon as the transports started from Gloucester Point, a telegraph building party began reconstructing the Fort Monroe line used by McClellan in 1862, from Williamsburg to James-

town Island in the James River, from whence messages were soon forwarded by despatch boats, which were kept running between the Island and Bermuda Hundred. Jamestown Island office was worked by W. N Embree and W. S. Logue. It was, at that season of the year, a very disagreeable place. Most venomous reptiles in great numbers were there, but what proved infinitely more annoying were the mosquitoes and other winged tormentors, that compelled the operators, while on duty at night, to wear gloves and cover their heads and faces, much as one would to defend against a swarm of bees. Field lines were also constructed from Bermuda Hundred to the head-quarters of General Butler on Proctor's Creek, and to both wings of his army, which proved invaluable to that officer in the conduct of his operations. These lines were under the direction of Richard O'Brien, who, says Major Eckert, was "indefatigable in his exertions to render them of service to the Government." Operating in this district at this time were John D. Tinney, at City Point; O'Brien and Nichols, at Butler's head-quarters; H. N. Snow and W. H. Wilson, detailed from Ohio regiments, at Bermuda Hundred; O. B. Vincent, at General Gilmore's, and at Smith's on the right, near Fort Darling, C. A. Homan, whose office consisted of a cracker box under a tree.

As already seen, Grant's army had crossed the Rapidan. As the morning broke, Lee's signal officers on Clark's Mountain espied the advancing columns and promptly notified the General, whose signal fires upon the heights attracted the watchful sentinels along the whole line. Lee's army then knew that Union legions were pushing forward, and it bravely concentrated to resist, even unto death. The 5th, 6th and 7th of May were sanguinary days in the Wilderness, where Lee's inferior forces were more easily maneuvered than Meade's bulky army. It was a "give and take" battle all along the line for five miles. Grant's only information came by staff officers and couriers. He could see but little. No attempt to construct the field telegraph appears to have been made during this engagement, but in all subsequent ones it was greatly relied upon. The Union loss in the three days battle was 2,261 killed, 8,785 wounded and 2,902 missing, while those on the other side must also have been very

great. As no official report was made, they are computed to be from about seven thousand to twenty-five thousand men, according to the ruling bias or purpose of the historian.

During the afternoon of the seventh, telegrams were received, stating that Sherman expected to fight Johnston on that day, and that Butler's force reached City Point on the fifth. These and numberless other cipher despatches were received by mounted scouts from long distances, as small bodies of the enemy had gotten behind Grant's army. These were sometimes successful in capturing despatch-bearers. On the eighth, Emerick, after riding all night, was obliged to assist Beckwith in translating and putting up ciphers, as, owing to the uncertainties of the route to the nearest office, all telegrams that would afford any important clue to Grant's operations or purposes were put in cipher.

General Grant, failing of Lee's destruction in the drawn battle of the Wilderness, moved the army past Lee's right to the neighborhood of Spottsylvania Court House, where he was again confronted by his wily adversary. Warren, who took the lead, held the Union center, Hancock, the right, Sedgwick, the left, and on the next day (tenth) Burnside took position on Sedgwick's left. The engagement here began on the morning of the eighth and continued with some intermission through the ninth, tenth, eleventh and twelfth, the losses on both sides far exceeding those of the Wilderness. On the eleventh, late in the afternoon, it was determined to move Hancock's corps to the rear of the Fifth and Sixth, and connecting with Burnside, with a view on Hancock's part, particularly, of a daybreak attack on the twelfth. In bringing about this sudden change, the field telegraph was, if not indispensable, at least of great service, as the "details," wrote an operator at Meade's head-quarters in his diary on the eleventh, "could not have been arranged with sufficient promptness without it." About nine o'clock, P. M., the Second Corps, an army in itself, moved in a darkness that could almost be felt, over muddy roads, three or four miles to the left. Operator Rose accompanied Hancock along the line of the previous day's terrible battle and almost within hearing of the enemy. Not a loud word was spoken as the long column slowly and silently moved to the point from whence, at four in the

morning, it was to charge and surprise the enemy behind the works he had struggled so stoutly to hold. At two A. M., of the twelfth, Rose, accompanied by an officer of General Mott's staff, rode somewhat to the rear to find the telegraph wire and connect his instrument. By the light of a candle the line was discovered and the office opened on another cracker box. Hither also came Colonel Morgan, chief of Hancock's staff, who had a talk with General Burnside (who was at his office on the left), giving the position of the Second Corps and learning that of the Ninth. General Meade was also the recipient, at this time, of several despatches from Morgan. A heavy mist obscured the Union operations, when at 4:30, A. M., the most successful charge since crossing the Rapidan was made upon the enemy, resulting in the capture of about four thousand prisoners, over thirty colors, several thousand stand of small arms, horses, caissons, etc. Major General Edward Johnson and Brigadier General Stuart were among the prisoners. The assaulting troops pressed on for half a mile, when they met another line of works that resisted further advance. And now in their turn came the Confederates, charge upon charge. Slowly but surely, by reason of their reinforced masses, they drove Hancock's men back to the first line they had captured, beyond which they would not budge and could not be driven. Burnside's corps had already become heavily engaged and was fighting valiantly. While the enemy, constantly increasing in numbers, were pressing Hancock hard, he had recourse to the wires. To General Meade he telegraphed that "if the Sixth Corps" (on his right) "did not attack at once he could not hold the works he had captured." Meade promptly telegraphed Warren on the Beverly plantation, and in ten minutes after this despatch was sent, that corps did attack and Hancock held his own.

Edwards and Ed Hall, operating for Warren, had very uncomfortable quarters, owing to the fact that the enemy seemed to take special delight in shelling the large farm house in which their office was situated. During two successive days that it was fired at, a number of shells went clear through the building. It often occurred that the line was thrown down by the enemy's shells. Then it became the duty of the operators to cause it to be promptly repaired, a work which they often undertook them-

selves. At one time before Spottsylvania, E. A. and W. C. Hall, Henderson and Edwards were together, when they tossed up a penny to see who should repair a break thus made near their office, but the line was broken so often that these operators took turns in splicing it, always remarking before starting out, "If I stop a shell, send my things home."

With the twelfth, the action at Spottsylvania ceased and the horrible details of it were given to the telegraph, from which history may be compiled. Not the least important of the despatches, is one of the eleventh, from Grant to Halleck. The following excerpt therefrom, promptly given the public, reanimated the nation, already in gloom over what it feared might prove useless sacrifices, viz.:

> We have now ended the sixth day of very heavy fighting. The result to this time is much in our favor. But our losses have been heavy as well as those of the enemy. We have lost to this time eleven general officers, killed, wounded and missing, and probably twenty thousand men. I think the loss of the enemy must be greater, we having taken over four thousand prisoners, whilst he has taken from us but few, except a few stragglers. I am now sending back to Belle Plain all my wagons for a fresh supply of provisions and ammunition, and *propose to fight it out on this line if it takes all summer.*

After the battle of Spottsylvania, Fredericksburg was taken possession of by Union troops, and constituted a temporary base of supplies. We have already stated that a new line was built from Washington *via* Port Tobacco, Md., to Maryland Point. This was extended across the Potomac, by a submarine cable two miles in length and the wire continued thence *via* Belle Plain to Fredericksburg, from which place a line of couriers was established with the army. The office at Maryland Point was opened May 16, and those at Belle Plain and Fredericksburg within a day or two thereafter.

On the night of May 20, the Army of the Potomac moved from Spottsylvania Court House to Bowling Green and Milford Station, on the Richmond & Fredericksburg Railroad, and a temporary base was established at Port Royal, on the Rappahannock below Fredericksburg. Another line was constructed from Belle Plain to Port Royal, the office at the latter place being

opened May 24. After a short halt, the army moved forward from Bowling Green and vicinity, to and across the North Anna where several spirited engagements took place. The field telegraph was now so thoroughly organized, that though every corps of the army moved daily, yet the head-quarters of each was in communication with General Meade every night. The field line consisted of seven small, soft iron wires coated with rubber and strung on lances or trees. On the twenty-seventh, Harper Caldwell, Doren and Emerick remained with their battery wagon some time after Meade had left, and when they started, moving parallel to the North Anna, where it was impossible to retreat, the enemy opened a brisk fire on them. The mules becoming unmanageable, ran against a gate post, badly injuring the wagon, but the driver bravely remained with his team, bringing all inside the picket lines and out of danger long after the operators and Doren, who were well mounted, had reached that haven.

On the twenty-eighth, Meade's army withdrew from its position south of the North Anna and marched to Hanover Town, on the Pamunkey, where it crossed and took position about Cold Harbor. The offices at Belle Plain, Fredericksburg, Port Royal and Maryland Point were closed about May 30, the base of supplies having been changed to White House. Consequently the line from Fortress Monroe to Yorktown was extended along the north bank of the York from Gloucester Point to West Point, submarine cables being used to cross the York and Mattapony Rivers. From West Point a line was built on the north bank of the Pamunkey to White House. The office at West Point was opened June 2, and at White House on the third. Between the latter place and Cold Harbor, a line of couriers was established. William McIntosh and party of builders, accompanied by operator Homan, constructed about twelve miles of line from Gloucester Point. In the construction of the line from Gloucester to West Point, McIntosh's or some other building party had several serious skirmishes with guerrillas, in which the latter were driven off, but of the builders, two were killed and several wounded. The following operated at these several offices: at Port Tobacco, C. Weber; across from Maryland Point, D. E. Rand; at Belle Plain, F. T. Bickford; at White House, Clinton S. Barrett and later D. E.

Rand and Bickford; at White Plains, W. K. Applebaugh, assisted doubtless by some others. Cowen, J. E. Bliss and Rand worked the White House office during its busiest days.

Applebaugh, detailed from the Sixteenth Pennsylvania cavalry, in which he was Sergeant-Major, while at White Plains, started with a small party in a tug-boat for the mouth of the Mattapony to repair a break in the line. The guerrillas fired at the party from the river banks on the downward trip, and on reaching Little York, one of the boat hands abandoned the tug, consequently Applebaugh by request of the captain, took charge of the wheel on the return trip and piloted the little vessel up the river sixteen miles, notwithstanding the firing from the banks was renewed. The bales of hay surrounding the pilot house, proved a good protection to the novice at the wheel. When the office at the White House was being removed later, owing to a new base being established, General Fitz Hugh Lee hurried operations greatly by shelling its locality until driven off by Sheridan's force that had come after him. At Bethesda church, the enemy succeeded in driving back a portion of General Warren's corps, thus leaving exposed for some distance, the field telegraph line. This, the rebels gathered, coiled up and rammed into one of their guns and shot back to the Union camp, whither it came whirling through the air with a hideous noise, until caught in the bushes and trees. The operators joked over the affair a good deal, and used to ask one another, why the Confederates didn't send an operator along with it.

Every day's advance brought on a battle, not a general engagement to be sure, but a serious conflict. June 2, Meade's head-quarters were moved to a point near Cold Harbor. Doren and Emerick remained with the light battery wagon at Via's house (where a field office had been opened the day before for Meade) until new head-quarters were established. The enemy's cavalry were close by this house when the office was closed. The operators and the superintendent of construction escaped, but Sergeant Corrigan, late of the Signal Corps, but then under Doren, with a wagon and guard, went back to take down the wire. Before reaching Via's they were fired upon and driven off. The sergeant however, was shot through the knee and wounded so badly that he died the next day, greatly regretted

by all the telegraphers with the army, especially at Meade's, where he was highly esteemed. At another time hereabouts, Doren, whose bravery was as marked as his energy, instead of sending a subordinate as one less courageous would have done, started at night with a lantern to find a break in the field wire and repair it. Meade's quarters had become too uncomfortable, in consequence of the excellent range the artillerists had obtained, and it was while head-quarters were being removed rearward that he advanced with his light, which the Confederate gunners soon began to fire at. But undaunted by their concentrated fire, he pressed on and mended the line. Just then his spirited horse was hit by a minnie ball. Before Doren could control the terrified beast, he had carried his master *beyond the Federal picket lines* and nearly into those of the enemy. Doren dismounted, and stealing his way back, succeeded in reaching camp with the dawn of day.

The battle of Cold Harbor occurred on the 3d of June, and was even more hurtful to the Union army than Spottsylvania and not nearly so damaging to the enemy. In Greeley's "American Conflict" (Vol. 2, p. 582) appears the statement that "twenty minutes after the first shot was fired, fully ten thousand of our men were stretched writhing on the sod, or still and calm in death; while the enemy's loss was probably little more than one thousand." Doubtless this is somewhat overwrought as to time and the enemy's losses, but it indicates forcibly the fearful character of the contest on the Union side, and the remarkable courage of men, armed with a just cause, who, regardless of their love of life and health, of the necessities of living to those dependent on them in the far-off Northern hamlet, town or city; regardless of all ties that bind man to earth, rushed, for their country's sake and for posterity, through marsh and mire, over hill and dale, upon an enemy as daring as they, behind works erected by soldiers as skillful as they, into the vortex of death and wounds, into a seething cauldron of missiles.

In a diary of an operator on the field, I find: "Very heavy fighting indeed. The telegraph played an important part; offices being opened at head-quarters in the rear center and at each corps head-quarters. Operators at Ninth Corps head-quarters on the right were under heavy fire, and one, if not two of them,

retreated in decidedly bad order." (The only instance during the campaign of an operator being frightened from his post.) "Operator Sam Edwards was ordered to go there, and did so fearlessly, although exposed to great danger." Edwards and E. A. Hall especially distinguished themselves for bravery on many occasions during this campaign. Rose and W. C. Hall's office, like most of the others, was within easy reach of the enemy's guns, and sustained quite a heavy shelling during the action at Cold Harbor. One shell passed directly over their telegraph tent and cut off two legs of a mule standing near by. On four other occasions their office was under fire, and during one of them Captain McCune, provost marshal at head-quarters, lost a leg. The Eighteenth Corps having reinforced Grant's army, George Henderson and C. K. Hambright, operators, kept its commander, Smith, in telegraphic communication with Meade's quarters. The enemy's shells killed a soldier close by the operators' office, near Cold Harbor. C. J. Ryan arrived shortly after and relieved Hambright at a time when head-quarters was subjected to a galling fire.

Grant's next move was, by marching cautiously and keeping constantly in readiness to repel attack, to cross the Chickahominy on the enemy's right, and then the James, effecting a new base of supplies at City Point, with the view to the speedy capture of Petersburg and operations against Richmond from the south side. The passage of the James was effected magnificently, telegraph offices being opened at the crossings. Pending an engagement near the Avery plantation, Edwards, whose office was a cartridge box on the ground, under an apple tree, read to General Warren, Meade's telegraphic instructions, although at the time the operator was subjected to a heavy musketry fire, most of the enemy's shells passing over. One of the minnie balls struck close to Edwards' feet. Warren drew his sword and with it dug up the bullet, saying as he found it, "A close one; I'll save it," and put it in his pocket. Edwards preserved as mementos a piece of shell which, at this point, cut away a part of his horse's tail; also a musket ball that passed between himself and Ed Hall, and within two feet of either

Meade's army advanced against Petersburg, which was attacked on the sixteenth, and on the eighteenth, assaulted by the

combined armies of Meade and Butler. It was the old story of the same defenders behind formidable works, resulting as had nearly all previous assaults by either army against an entrenched enemy. The Union loss was fully six thousand men. Telegraphers at each corps and army head-quarters did constant and most important service during this battle. General Grant was at City Point, a few miles away, but in telegraphic communication with Meade, who made his head-quarters, during the fight, at the Ninth Corps head-quarters, near the right of the line. Emerick was at Meade's office, receiving occasional telegraphic instructions from Grant to Meade, and transmitting Meade's to the corps commanders. Thus the telegraph did staff duty more satisfactorily than horse and rider ever could.

Pending Grant's operations against Lee, Butler's army, which as we have seen, advanced toward Richmond, met, on the 16th of May, a severe repulse, and until June 10, remained substantially inactive at Bermuda Hundred, *i. e.*, all except Smith's corps, which, during the last two days of the month, joined Meade's army. On the 10th of June, General Gilmore's corps and Kautz's cavalry made an unsuccessful effort to capture Petersburg. This was renewed four days later by Smith's returned corps, but that too was unsuccessful, owing to causes which produced a war of words. Wilson's and Kautz's cavalry destroyed about fifty miles of Lee's railroad communication, but was terribly harassed on their return, losing fifteen hundred men.

During all these operations, Grant's eye was on his other commanders also. In General Sherman's "Memoirs" is printed:

> The value of the magnetic telegraph in war can not be exaggerated, as was illustrated by the perfect concert of action between the armies in Virginia and in Georgia, in all 1864. Hardly a day intervened when General Grant did not know the exact state of facts with me, more than fifteen hundred miles off, as the wires ran.

In his annual report for the year ending June 30, 1864, Major Eckert said:

> A telegraph line was built on the south side of the James River, from City Point to Swan's Point, there connecting with a submarine

cable to Jamestown Island; but owing to interruptions by guerrillas, this line was not worked successfully until June 24, at which time a sufficient force was stationed along the line to protect it from guerrilla raids. From City Point, lines were built to General Meade's head-quarters, two and one-half miles south-east of Petersburg, and to General Butler's head-quarters, at Point of Rocks, on the Appomattox, crossing at that place with submarine cables. Lines were also constructed to all corps head-quarters and to our advance works. During the operations at Spottsylvania, on the North Anna, at Cold Harbor, in the march from Cold Harbor to City Point, and in the battles in front of Petersburg in June, the field telegraph lines were worked with great success, and invaluable aid was thus rendered to the Government. General Grant and General Meade were kept in almost constant communication with each other and with the different corps of the army. In the above-mentioned operations, *one hundred and fifty miles of field telegraph were constructed and worked*, and when the army moved, were taken down, thus making it necessary for the construction party to travel a distance of three hundred miles. To D. Doren, Superintendent of Construction, A. H. Caldwell, Chief Operator, and the men under them, is due much of the success attending these lines. They have worked many times in the face of the enemy, exposed to fire, without shelter; have been kept up day and night whenever required, and have had innumerable difficulties which can never be known to but few. They deserve the highest commendation.

In a letter written by Major Eckert, June 15, 1864, is found the following additional statement:

My field telegraph continues to work like a charm. Instead of letting down, it has improved every day since we left Brandy Station, and is complimented by all. Doren has *built and taken down* an average of twenty-four miles *daily*. Most of his work has been after night, and under very great disadvantages. *All corps* head-quarters and many brigades have been in constant connection with Generals Grant's and Meade's head-quarters, during *every engagement*. Also, every reconnoissance that has been made in force has had telegraphic connection with head-quarters. Last, but not least, connection has been kept up while on the march. This was accomplished by making a halt at stated times (intervals of thirty minutes to one hour), reporting any change with the advance that might occur, or any change in

orders from head-quarters to the advance or rear. We have lost thus far one man killed and one wounded (builders), ten horses and four mules killed. In Longstreet's attack upon Hancock after leaving Spottsylvania, we lost our battery wagon. A solid shot struck the running gear, demolishing that portion of it completely. The sections of battery were soon transferred to a common army wagon, and put in working order in less than twenty minutes. Fortunately, not a single cup was broken. During this dash, we lost seven miles of covered wire in one line, and one mile in another.

Considering the novel use and vital importance of the telegraph on this campaign, is it not marvelously strange that a staff officer, at general head-quarters, participating in this campaign, could write a large volume thereon, in which every noteworthy disadvantage that General Grant labored under is brought out in strong light, and yet make no mention whatever of the striking military help which the field telegraph afforded?

CHAPTER IX.

THE TELEGRAPH IN THE SHENANDOAH VALLEY, WEST VIRGINIA AND THE DISTRICT.—SIGEL DEFEATED.—CLOYD'S MOUNTAIN.—PENNSYLVANIA, MARYLAND AND THE DISTRICT INVADED.

In the Valley of the Shenandoah and West Virginia, the Union forces were, as stated, to advance contemporaneously with Meade's movement over the Rapidan. General Sigel, in the Valley, moved as far as New Market, where, on the 15th of May, 1864, he was defeated by General Breckenridge, and retired to near Strasburg, wiser by a loss of seven hundred men, six guns, etc.

To defeat Sigel, the forces opposing Crook and Averill in West Virginia, were greatly diminished. Nevertheless, Averill, with two thousand cavalry, was roughly handled by General John Morgan's force, at Wythesville. The remainder of Crook's command, comprising three brigades of infantry and about three hundred cavalry, left Fayetteville, West Virginia, during the first week of May, and proceeded to Lexington, destroying there the camp and garrison equipage of two rebel regiments, which had been left in charge of a guard. On the evening of the eighth, the expedition arrived at Shannon's Cross Roads. A Confederate telegraph line near by was tapped by the cipher operator, W. K. Smith, accompanying the expedition, but owing to the precaution of the Confederate operators, but little information was obtained.

One of Smith's chief objects in tapping the wire was to ascertain who commanded the opposing forces, as that might indicate the extent of the reinforcements the enemy may have received. When Smith "cut in" his instrument, he found no circuit, but wisely waited half an hour before trying a ground connection. Failing at the end of that time, he tried his ground wire, when the operator at Dublin Depot said, "Sign," but as Smith did not

know the office calls, that was just what he could not do without establishing his identity ; consequently, he instantly took off his "ground," and waited another half hour, hoping the line would become "OK ;" but it did not. Smith then again attached his ground wire, when the Dublin operator, who somehow had learned the name of the telegrapher with Crook, said: "Oh, Smith, we know you are there, you d— Yankee." Thereupon Smith began a conversation, during which the rebel said: "You will be captured, sure, but I will speak to *General Jenkins* and have him parole you. Yes, I will do more than that, I will. I will take you around and introduce you to my sweet-heart. Do you want Richmond *Press* news?" But Smith had found out who was in command and could not stay longer, so he and escort hurried to General Crook.

On the morning of the ninth, the Union troops reached Cloyd's Mountain, five miles from Dublin Depot. General Crook at once made an attack upon the rebels, who were posted behind entrenchments, and after two hours resistance, they fled in utter confusion, leaving their dead and wounded. During the engagement, the cipher operator acted as aide-de-camp to the General, and received a complimentary notice from that officer, in his official report of the affair. General Crook pushed on for Dublin Depot, and when within three miles of the town, met a force of Morgan's men, numbering about one thousand, who had come from Saltville to reinforce the Confederates at Cloyd's Mountain but were not in time to effect a junction. After a skirmish the rebels retreated, and the Federals, about three, P.M., of the ninth, entered Dublin, a station on the Virginia and Tennessee Railroad. The depot buildings, Government property and telegraph office here were destroyed. Operator Smith hurried to the telegraph office, but his rebel friend had run away, having first partially atoned for this discourtesy by engaging the station agent to be hospitable to him. It is a pleasing fact that most of the opposing telegraphers would not, or could not, resist those sentiments of fraternity which have ever characterized the business.

Crook pushed on to burn the long railroad bridge ten miles from Dublin Depot which, after an engagement of two hours, was accomplished. The object of the expedition having been at-

tained, the command started upon its return *via* Salt Pond and Peters Mountains, through Union, across Green Briar River to Meadow Bluffs, and reached there May 23, having marched about three hundred miles.

Captain David, the superintendent in this department of West Virginia, resigned the service January 20, 1864, on account of ill health, and was succeeded by Captain Lynch, who was commissioned October 27, 1863.

T. B. A. DAVID, 1862.

THOMAS B. A. DAVID, for eight years preceding the war, had been manager of the telegraph office at Wheeling, Va. His character was established, and in selecting him, Col. Stager well knew that his orders would receive scrupulous attention. David was another graduate of the Pittsburgh office, which is *alma mater* to perhaps more men who began as messengers and have distinguished themselves since, than any other office in the country. His was uphill work from a very early beginning, for owing to the demise of his father, he was, at ten years of age, thrown largely upon his own resources. On his father's side he was French, but his mother was of Puritan extraction. Grandfather David was a prominent Frenchman, and owned a large property in San Domingo. An insurrection on the island destroyed his property and a new *regime* in France exiled himself in America, where David's father was born. The latter, who was highly educated, in the schools of Paris, at the time of his death, was in the service of the Federal Government in the ord-

nance department, for which position he was indebted to General La Fayette, a friend of the family. David's mother was a daughter of the gentleman who conceived and executed the plan of making the famous "Springfield" musket of interchangeable parts, so that a fractured portion was easily duplicated. The subject of this sketch was, from early boyhood, the *man* of his mother's family, consisting of six children. He was born in Pittsburgh, Pa., in 1836, where he began his labors in the telegraph service at the age of thirteen years, as messenger. Three years later he was employed there as operator, and the next year he became operator and manager of the "Lake Erie Line" office in Pittsburgh. A year later he was appointed manager of the Wheeling, Va., office, a position he held when the war began. Ill health has been a great drawback to Mr. David. Doubtless had his growing days been less severely tasked by the necessities of his position, he would have developed a more robust habit, and remained in the military service to the close of the war.

STAFFORD G. LYNCH, David's successor, was born in Waterloo, Seneca Co., N. Y., September 9, 1832, and after his common and academic schooling, like so many other officers of the corps, learned the art of printing. For associate compositors at the office of the *Cayuga Tocsin*, in Auburn, N. Y., where he began, he had Ed F. Barnes and C. M. Stebbins, who since became well known telegraphers. In 1846, Stafford became a messenger in the Auburn telegraph office, then among the first opened. There he learned to operate. Having been a typo and messenger before becoming a telegraphist, his success as an electrician was, according to many examples, only a question of time. Those who succeeded without these prerequisites, especially those who had neither, must have had genius thrust upon them. The Little Falls, N. Y., office was Lynch's first, but in the course of a year or so, he went to Cleveland, Ohio, thence to Detroit, and subsequently to Philadelphia offices. While he was at the latter city under James D. Reid, superintendent of the Western lines, now a telegraph patriarch, revered by surviving "old timers," whom he aided by advice and deed, but two instruments were used. These registers indented in Morse characters all the Western business for Philadelphia and the cities East and South.

In a year or two Lynch returned to Cleveland, where he took charge of the O'Reilly line office, which in 1853 he resigned to become chief clerk and cashier in the post office there, which position he retained until the commencement of the war.

While contemplating how he could best serve his country, Mr. Stager, who had just been placed in charge of military telegraphs, invited his services. Accordingly he went to Western Virginia, where the Unionists had recently obtained possession of the western divisions of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad. His first office was at New Creek, the base of the mountain range on the south branch of the Potomac. While here he distinctly heard the guns of that historic battle field, the first Bull Run, seventy-five miles distant. When General Kelly advanced to Romney, T. B. A. David built a line there where Lynch operated until the approach of Stonewall Jackson's troops made the Federal position untenable. Then the operator pressed a Secesh horse and buggy into his service, and in a storm, at midnight, started for Green Spring Run with the command under General Lander. Lander and Lynch went to Paw Paw, where the former, a brave officer, a kind hearted man and a devoted husband, died, it is believed by some, for want of proper treatment and care. His wife was in Washington at the time, forced to content herself with his affectionate messages and to console him solely by the loving telegrams she sent.

STAFFORD G. LYNCH.

From Paw Paw, Lynch was ordered to the telegraph office in the War Department, where from the spring of 1862, he re-

mained until the fall of 1863. During a part of 1863, he served there as Censor of the Press in addition to his other duties. Those were days that tried men's souls; tested their physical endurance and taxed their patriotism. After working all day with scarce an intermission for meals, the operators were very often required to continue until two A. M., and even later, but they were incited thereto largely by the remarkable zeal displayed by the great war secretary, Stanton, who also kept long hours; he who proved himself an invincible barrier to the cormorants who sought to rob the Government through fat contracts; he who devoted himself more arduously than any other cabinet officer to destroy the Rebellion. Mr. Lincoln also encouraged the telegraphers by his daily visits, his greetings and intense solicitude, for as his eyes ran over the telegrams, his countenance bespoke the pleasure or sorrow they gave him. The President's kindness led him sometimes to trust important secrets to others, who betrayed his confidence, and hence it sometimes happened that a military necessity was believed to exist for withholding from his observation, despatches concerning important army movements. Whether such necessity was real or imagined, the fact remains that telegrams were kept from his eyes on account of such actual or assumed essentiality.

While McClellan was at the gates of Richmond, and its fall regarded as certain, Post-master General Blair wrote Mr. Lynch virtually promising him the Federal post office in that city, but the Union forces did not enter it. The following fall, Lynch was offered the chief clerkship of the New Orleans, La., office, at a salary of sixteen hundred dollars per annum, but declined it, and a year later he was made captain in the telegraph service and assigned to duty at Cleveland, Ohio, as purchasing quartermaster for the corps, where he handled for Colonel Stager all the money which was transferred in his name to his assistants, and when Captain David resigned, his duties also devolved upon Captain Lynch, but the care and operation of the telegraphs in West Virginia was left almost exclusively to the discretion of Charles O. Rowe, who had the reputation then as he has now, of discharging the trusts confided to him in an able, thorough and commendable manner. Perhaps no greater trust devolved

upon any assistant officer of the corps than that which was so honorably and ably executed by Captain Lynch.

For the year ending June 30, 1864, the Union forces within the Department of West Virginia were expected to maintain a series of posts along and adjacent to the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad and the Kanawha River, as far up as Gauley, Virginia. Captain David transferred to his successor a line from Hamden to Fayette, one hundred and fifty-one miles; one from Galipolis, Ohio, to South Point, Ohio, forty-five miles; one from Clarksburg, Virginia, to Beverly, Virginia, fifty-eight miles, and another from Clarksburg to Bulltown, Virginia, forty-nine miles; total, three hundred and three miles. Captain Lynch built a line from Gauley to Lewisburg, sixty-two miles, and from Green Spring to Springfield, seven miles, making a total in operation in May, 1864, when the general advance was begun, of three hundred and seventy-two miles of line. These wires were all operated by a force averaging forty persons, including repairers. At least one hundred and twenty thousand telegrams were transmitted over them during the year preceding June 30, 1864. Among the operators in this department during this time were Charles O. Rowe, W. F. Allen, D. Colestock, N. De Bree, G. K. Smith, C. D. Tull, J. Jolls, R. A. Furr, W. H. H. Lancaster, C. C. Starling, D. W. Warner, M. D. Graham, G. H. Curtiss, M. T. Seymour, John Morgan, C. J. Thomas, J. W. Vermillion, A. T. Brenaman, Joseph S. Keith, R. C. Humphrey, Curley Berry, J. C. Florence, W. H. Wilson, L. B. Dennis, S. M. Shurr, D. H. Johnson, F. B. G. Miller, C. C. Phillips, J. P. Klunk, Robert G. Worth, A. T. McKelvey, A. K. V. Hull, John W. Gregg, J. S. Williams, S. G. Lynch and Alfred Winder.

Many incidents occurred during the year 1863 and the forepart of 1864, which indicated that the spirit and temper of the operators along the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad, west of Cumberland, and also south of the railroad, among the barren mountains, in what they then called a God-forsaken country, was the same as that which marked those in the other departments where loyalty and fidelity were the watchwords.

Alfred Winder, on the Clarksburg and Gauley line, whose office was in Scott's house, about midway between Sutton and

Summerville, had a guard of twenty soldiers. Early on the morning of January 3, 1864, half an hour after a supply team and eight men had left to return to Sutton, he started towards that place to repair the line. Shortly after, five men of Jenkins' cavalry stepped into the roadway from adjoining woods, and with cocked guns persuaded the operator to halt and surrender to Captain Duffield. He was ordered to proceed up the mountain adjoining and keep his eyes to the front until directed to stop. The guard, taking the bridle rein of Winder's horse in his left hand and a cocked pistol in his right, walked behind the captive for a few hundred yards, when they sat down and waited. Soon one or two shots were heard, and four of the eight Union guards, whom Winder had passed before his misfortune, together with the driver and team, were captured without resistance, as the soldiers' guns were in the wagon ahead of them. The remaining four, luckily, were in a ravine near by, and escaped unseen. For eight days, Winder and his fellows were compelled to march over the mountains, through snow-storms, in Indian file, with a led horse and man in advance to break the way through the deep snow, until the man was exhausted, when his place was taken by another. Their first stop, but for a short time only, was at the house of a Union man named Rose, who escaped on their coming. His patriotic daughter, a pleasing girl of sixteen, ran to Scott's house to inform the guard of the capture, but the lieutenant in command took the wrong road. Captain Duffield proved a good protector of his captives, as several bushwhacking residents vainly urged upon him their policy epitomized in the adage, "Dead men tell no tales." Until beyond danger of recapture, each Unionist was allowed, at night, to ride behind a captor. The prisoners were taken before General Jenkins at Staunton, who lectured those that stated they were from Southern States, adding, as he struck his fist upon the table, "You have no State pride; if Virginia seceded from the Confederacy to-day, I would go with her." He dismissed all but the telegrapher, whom he questioned closely as to the forces at Summerville, Sutton, Birch River and Gauley Bridge. In answer, Winder purposely greatly understated the garrisons at these posts. After six days visit to Castle Thunder, they were taken to Libby Prison, where the soldiers were promptly pa-

roled and forwarded to the Federal lines by flag-of-truce boat; but Winder was marched to the citizens' room, to remain until called for. This room, 70 x 60 feet, contained a large number of men of various callings. There, black-eyed peas or boiled rice, bread and mule or horse meat constituted the general diet. After a month's incarceration, Ross, the chief clerk, asked, "Where is that operator? I've a partner for him." It was none other than R. F. Weitbrecht, captured with General Stoughton at Fairfax Court House. Weitbrecht, unaccustomed to horseback riding, had been indulging it for three days and nights, and when he entered, he felt like exclaiming, "I'm glad there are no chairs in this room." Six weeks later, when an Englishman and the operators were the only remaining prisoners in the room, clerk Ross started the latter to their respective departments.

General Hunter succeeded to Sigel's command, and with a larger force, moved up the valley of the Shenandoah, to encounter the enemy under W. E. Jones, Breckenridge having gone to Lee. On the 1st of June, General Crook started with his command for Staunton, Va., *via* Lewisburg and Hot and Warm Springs, through Panther's Gap, into Augusta Valley. At Panther's Gap a soldier in rebel uniform was captured, claiming to belong to Imboden's command, but upon being brought to headquarters, was found to be the bearer of cipher messages prepared by R. R. McCaine, operator, accompanying General Hunter, which, when translated by W. K. Smith, Crook's operator, commanded that general to join Hunter at Charlottsville. The order was however, afterwards changed and the two commands united at Staunton. From there the expedition moved *via* Lexington and Buckhannon, crossing the Blue Ridge at foot of Peaks of Otter, *via* Liberty, for Lynchburg. On arriving in the vicinity of Lynchburg, Hunter successfully encountered the rebel force. At night the enemy was reinforced by troops under General Early. After resisting the Confederate attack on the second day, the Union forces fell back under cover of the night and started for the Shenandoah Valley, but finding that the rebels were pursuing actively, and that Hunter probably could not get out in the direction taken; the column turned toward the Kanawha Valley and marched out *via* Salem, Saint's Springs and

Lewisburg, to Gauley Bridge. At the latter place, orders were received to remove the troops to Charleston, where they took transports for Parkersburg, and from thence by railroad to Martinsburg, Va. From Martinsburg the troops were ordered to Harpers Ferry, and into Maryland after General Early, who had come down the Shenandoah Valley and crossed into that State. Union General Wallace was defeated near Frederick City, Md., losing 1,959 to the enemy's—as they say—600, and rebel Johnson's cavalry pressed on toward Baltimore.

By this time the usual current of horrible rumors had set in. Baltimore and Washington and the cities of Southern Pennsylvania were frightened at Early's twenty thousand men, duly magnified into a great army. It was now the time for the North to become again despondent and decry the management of the armies. In the campaign from the Rapidan to Petersburg, including the assault on the 16th, 17th and 18th of June, the Army of the Potomac proper had lost, at the most favorable calculation, forty-five thousand men. True, at the end of the month, including Butler's troops, the army, owing to large reinforcements, numbered 107,419 present for duty, but Lee's additions had been considerable also, and hence the situation *was* disheartening. Gallant Sheridan had penetrated the enemy's lines several times; had whipped Stuart's troopers, that would not stay whipped, and wounded that splendid officer unto death; had torn up railroads and telegraphs; cut off supplies; made captures and even entered some of the defences of Richmond; but the great losses made the nation bleed, and the people in their Northern homes could not comprehend the claim of advantages commensurate with the sacrifice, while they could understand that Lee held the Army of the Potomac at bay, and still had spare men enough to endanger the Union capital and Northern cities.

General Grant forwarded troops to Washington, to resist Early, but held on determinedly where he was until a better hold could be gained. The Sixth and Nineteenth Corps, the latter a reinforcement from the Gulf intended for City Point, were sent to Washington. Early appeared before that city; severed the lines of telegraph leading from the capital, except that to Point Lookout, Md., and for three days all telegrams for the

armies with Grant and for the North were sent *via* the Point, and thence by dispatch boat to Fort Monroe. Field lines were rapidly built to the forts around Washington, and offices opened at Forts Lincoln, Totten, Stevens, Reno, Corcoran, and at Chain Bridge and Arlington, which were kept open and were of great service until the enemy retreated. Early dared not attack, but moved off across the Potomac, and through Snicker's Gap toward Winchester, Va. The Sixth Corps returned from its pursuit, leaving Crook to move on Winchester; but Early turned on him at Kernstown, July 24, and drove him back to Bunker Hill, where the operator, Smith, was busy all night long, putting the General's telegrams into cipher for transmission, from the nearest office, to Washington and other points. Smith took part in several engagements hereabouts. Pennsylvania was again menaced and Chambersburg burned. The people all over the free and border States were intensely excited at the position of affairs, and crowded the telegraph offices. Never since telegraphy was known, were operators in such demand. In this trying military emergency, Sheridan was sent to command in the Valley. The clouds began lifting. It was the darkness that precedes the dawn.

CHAPTER X.

THE TELEGRAPH IN KENTUCKY AND EAST TENNESSEE IN 1864.—PERILOUS OPPOSITION TO ENLISTMENT OF NEGROES IN KENTUCKY.—MORGAN'S LAST RAID.—STONEMAN'S SUCCESSFUL RAID OWING LARGELY TO THE OPERATOR WITH HIM.

Affairs in this Department continued comparatively quiet from the time of Bragg's retreat, to the close of 1864. There were no great battles, nor were there large armies on Kentucky's soil during this period. The Rebellion had been effectually pushed farther back. Partisan forays and organized raids there were indeed, but Kentuckians were settling to the general conviction that their State was forever committed to the Union by the masses of her people, besides being welded thereto by the hot purpose of the North. Nevertheless it was a season of domestic turmoil; the foment was natural and usual in such cases; it was not probationary, for that implies conviction too general; it was transitionary. Old truths were crumbling before the logic of arms, if not the philosophy of higher morals than had been generally accepted in slave territory. Lincoln's proclamation of emancipation was being acquiesced in, when the next step, that of arming the negroes, seemed quite as harsh as the former, to this pro-slavery people.

On the first day of January, 1863, the President's proclamation, manumitting the slaves within districts in armed rebellion, went into effect. This was followed by Acts of Congress, directing the enlistment of colored men. Thomas E. Bramlette, elected Governor in August, 1863, by a Union majority of over fifty thousand, was stoutly opposed to the enrollment of slaves in Kentucky for the army, and disposed to resist the enforcement of the laws requiring such enlistment. The Provost Marshals in the State, nevertheless, began enrolling the colored males between the ages of twenty and forty-five years. At a public meeting in Lexington, March 10, 1864, the Governor was on the

platform with Colonel Frank Wolford, when the latter denounced the President as a tyrant and traitor, and counseled Kentuckians to resist the enrollment of their negroes. Captain Gross, of the Telegraph Corps, promptly telegraphed to General Schofield at Knoxville, the purport of Wolford's remarks, whereupon that officer was arrested and ordered to report at Knoxville, and about the twenty-fifth, he was dishonorably dismissed from the service by the President. Bramlette's appearance on the speakers' stand indicated sympathy with Wolford's remarks, and the uneasiness felt on that account, was painfully increased early the next month, when Lieutenant Governor Jacobs—subsequently sent into the Confederate lines—made an address quite as violent. The next development was a telegram from the Governor to the Provost Marshal at Danville, as follows: "I have telegraphed the President demanding that he stop the enrollment of negroes in this State. I await his answer. If he does not stop it, I will." A copy of this message was also forwarded to Schofield. That was Saturday, March the twelfth. On Monday, owing doubtless to the refusal of the President to suspend the enrollment, Bramlette telegraphed Doctor Breckenridge to "come to Frankfort prepared to go to Washington on an important mission, which might save the State much evil." At that time the Reverend Doctor Robert J. Breckenridge, an uncle of General John C. Breckenridge (C. S.), was one of the most influential men of the State in religion and politics. The Governor next telegraphed General Burbridge, who commanded the District of Kentucky, that he had sent for Breckenridge. He also wrote in strong terms of his purpose to prevent the enrollment, and the extraordinary means he proposed to adopt if it became necessary. Bramlette's letter determined Burbridge to see the Governor; Doctor T. S. Bell, a prominent loyalist, of Louisville, accompanied him. Tuesday morning Breckenridge and, at his request, J. M. Kelly, of the Telegraph Corps, went to Frankfort, where they found that the Governor had prepared and put in type a proclamation of an inflammatory character, calculated to array the State against the enlistment of the negroes. Burbridge and Bell were piloted by Kelly to Breckenridge's room, when the latter remarked, "I am glad you have come, for we are on the eve of open rebellion. I have declined

to go to Washington to try to induce the President to resist an act of Congress." Kelly was sent for the Governor, who came with Colonel Hodges, editor of the *Commonwealth*. The Governor read his proclamation from the proof sheets he was correcting, and added the remark that he had received a bushel of letters from different counties, saying that they would prevent the enrollment by force. After some discussion, during which the Governor continued to correct his proofs, Doctor Breckenridge asked Burbridge what his orders were, and how many troops he had. The General replied that he was instructed to carry out the act of Congress; that he had twenty-five thousand men, and was directed to call upon Governors Morton of Indiana and Brough of Ohio, for twenty-five thousand more each if needed, and in reply to further inquiry, threatened dire consequences to the Governor if he issued that proclamation. Bramlette who heard all, soon turned to the gentlemen, saying, "I am in the hands of my friends and will do as you advise." He handed the proclamation to Burbridge to revise. This was done by eliminating the most objectionable features and allowing the rest to stand as a compromise. This work was completed about four o'clock in the morning, and immediately telegraphed to Louisville and Cincinnati for publication. It cannot be doubted that this result was a happy one for Kentucky; brought about mainly through the instrumentality of Burbridge and Breckenridge, who, perhaps more than all others, should be credited with having avoided an armed conflict between the State and Federal authorities, which would have greatly strengthened the Confederates, notwithstanding a purpose to that end may not be fairly imputed to such men as Bramlette, Jacobs and Wolford, whose daring in the Union army made them conspicuous. After the proclamation, the Governor, Senator Dixon and Colonel Hodges visited Mr. Lincoln without effecting the result they desired.

After General Sherman raised the siege of Knoxville, in East Tennessee, in December, 1863, Longstreet retreated toward Rutledge and after some heavy skirmishing, posted his command in North-east Tennessee, with head-quarters in Rogersville, where he spent the winter. In the spring he removed into Virginia, rejoining General Lee, and Breckenridge's command, consisting in part of Morgan's, Vaughn's and Duke's forces, occupied that sec-

tion. During January, 1864, field telegraph offices were opened toward Longstreet at Mossy Creek and Powell's River Bridge, but before the end of the month these and Tazewell, Strawberry Plains and Kingston offices were closed, owing to the withdrawal of the Federal forces therefrom. Captain Gross' operations in the Department of the Ohio for the first half of 1864, are shown by him in his most excellent annual report as follows:

During the months of January and February, a new line was extended from a point six miles south of Camp Burnside, Kentucky, to Clinton, Tennessee, a distance by the line of one hundred miles. The severity of the weather, the nature of the country, rough, mountainous, heavily timbered and almost uninhabited, the difficulty of procuring the means of transportation for the necessary material, and subsistence for the men and animals engaged in the work, on account of the extraordinary demands for the same, to subsist the regular military forces in the field, renders this a very difficult and laborious work. I was only able to work the line, a few days, beyond a point between Chitwoods and Jacksboro, distant from Camp Burnside about sixty miles. The first failure to work was owing to depredations committed upon the line by the Twelfth Kentucky Regiment, while *en route* from Knoxville to Camp Burnside, by shooting off the insulators and cutting down the poles for fire-wood. Added to this, heavy storms of wind, sleet and rain passing over this section, trees in many instances were blown down upon the line, crushing it to the ground, and passing trains of army wagons, becoming entangled in the wires, rendered its destruction complete. Evil-disposed citizens in the vicinity of Pine Knob Tavern, and elsewhere along the line, damaged it severely by cutting down the poles and cutting the wire, some portions of which were entirely removed. Strenuous efforts were made to repair these damages. Parties for that purpose were organized and sent out to aid the stationary repairers in getting the line again in working condition; but no sooner were repairs made in one part of the line than difficulty was found to exist in other portions. One serious cause of annoyance was the total disregard paid to the line by the large parties of laborers sent out to work upon the military road, along which the wire was extended. They repeatedly felled trees across it, and in many instances cut down the poles and trees to which it was attached for support, even where no necessity for so doing existed. Prompt reports of these depredations were made

to the military authorities at Camp Burnside, and protection asked as soon as it could become known. The country through which the line passes is almost a wilderness, uninhabited save by a few wretched mountaineers, and was entirely destitute of either forage or subsistence. The greatest difficulty was experienced in procuring enough forage to keep the animals alive while the work of putting up the line was going on. I lost five out of twenty-two horses from starvation, and my men were, at times, two and three days without anything to eat. A full report of these facts was made to General Schofield, commanding the Department, and the abandonment of the line from Camp Burnside to Clinton ordered by him. Subsequently, portions of this abandoned line was reclaimed and used again, but the greater part of it was hopelessly ruined for any purpose whatever.

On the 1st of February, the line along the Virginia & East Tennessee Railroad, from Knoxville to Charleston, seventy miles, was transferred by me to Captain John C. VanDuzer, Assistant Quarter-master and Assistant Superintendent, for the reason that it was found to be much more easily supplied and managed by railroad from Chattanooga than by wagons over the mountainous country between Danville, Kentucky, and Knoxville, Tennessee, and also for the reason that at that time I was unable to keep telegraphic communication open between Cumberland Gap and Knoxville by the old route, viz., *via* Tazewell, Bean Station and Morristown, because parts of it were in the possession of the enemy.

Burksville, on the Cumberland River, thirty miles south-west of Columbia, Kentucky, had been for some time held as a military post, and communication with it by telegraph was very desirable. In obedience to an order from General Burbridge, commanding the District of Kentucky, through Captain Samuel Bruch, in March, I extended the line from Columbia to that point, thirty miles. The line from Columbia to Jamestown, eighteen miles, not having, for a number of months, been in actual use, although kept in repair, was taken down and the material used in the construction of the line to Burksville. In April, by running a second wire from Danville to Stanford, eleven miles, I was enabled to connect the two circuits of Camp Burnside and Mount Sterling and throw them into one; thereby lessening the amount of "repeating" done at Danville, and making communication between Camp Burnside and Camp Nelson complete, which was very desirable in view of the great business between those two important points. In that month, the line was

extended from Cumberland Gap to Knoxville, sixty-three miles, by Captain VanDuzer and myself; his party starting from Knoxville, mine from Cumberland Gap, and a junction formed at Fincastle, thirty miles from Cumberland Gap, thus giving Knoxville the advantage of a double northern connection; one, through my own department, *via* Cumberland Gap and Danville, to Louisville or Cincinnati; the other, *via* Chattanooga, Nashville and Louisville. Between Fincastle and Knoxville, Captain VanDuzer was enabled to connect at Clinton with the line put up by me in February between Clinton and Jacksboro, about nineteen miles, thus making the line actually put up between Knoxville and Fincastle, fourteen miles. I desire to acknowledge the valuable and timely assistance rendered me by Captain VanDuzer in the construction of this line. The distance, the nature of the intervening country and the extremely slow means of transportation by army wagons for the necessary material, made all my operations laborious and seemingly dilatory.

During the month of May, no demand was made upon me for new lines, and my efforts were directed toward repairing such of my lines as had been longest built. Many of the poles, none too good when first put up, had partially decayed and were easily broken off by wind and storms, and the insulators (Wade), from constant strain and exposure, were fast becoming worthless for purposes of insulation, especially in wet weather. These defects were removed by replacing the rotten poles and damaged insulators with new ones.

Early in the month of June, the enemy under the notorious, ubiquitous John H. Morgan, entered the State and made their first demonstration upon Mount Sterling, the terminus of my line in that part of the State. After stubborn resistance, the town was finally occupied by the enemy, and the country to the westward, through which my line ran, to a point within eleven miles of the city of Lexington. While held by the enemy, serious damage was done my line. The operator at Mount Sterling, Mr. J. W. Curtiss, remained at his post until the evacuation of the place by the Union forces, and then only saved himself by flight, carrying with him his instrument, despatches, etc. For six days he lay concealed, and finally stole through the enemy's lines and reached Lexington in safety, without the loss of anything valuable connected with his office. His conduct, under such trying circumstances, was exemplary and received my approbation. The enemy were, in a few days, de-

feated; first, in the streets of Lexington, and afterwards, at Cynthiana; their organization broken up and the entire force scattered and put to flight.

No sooner had the enemy disappeared, than prompt repairs were given the line, and the office at Mount Sterling re-opened. To aid in the repulse of the enemy in this important move, Colonel Weatherford's command, the Thirteenth Kentucky Cavalry, was called in from Burksville. A portion of the command was held at Green River Bridge, about forty miles from Burksville, and the operators on duty at Burksville and Columbia were ordered in to that point, thus for the time closing those two offices, and abandoning the line south of Green River Bridge. But no sooner were the enemy's forces scattered, than the Union troops again occupied Burksville, the line repaired and the abandoned offices re-opened as before. It was found that but little damage had been done this line, thus temporarily abandoned, and the work of putting it again in order was but light. After the defeat of the enemy at Cynthiana, small parties of his forces were traversing the State in all directions, stealing, marauding and working destruction wherever they went. Wherever they came in contact with my lines, only slight damage was done, and the interruptions thereby occasioned existed but a few hours. Such was the case between Camp Nelson and Nicholasville, between Stanford and Crab Orchard, and between Danville and Lebanon.

The following tabular statements are respectfully submitted:

LINES CONSTRUCTED, JANUARY 1, TO JUNE 30, 1864.

	MILES.
January—From six miles beyond Camp Burnside, Ky., to Jacksboro, Tenn.,	65
February—From Jacksboro, Tenn., to Clinton, Tenn.,	36
March—From Columbia, Ky., to Burksville, Ky.,	30
April—From Danville, Ky., to Stanford, Ky.,	11
April—From Cumberland Gap, Ky., to Fincastle, Tenn.,	30
Total,	172

LINES ABANDONED, JANUARY 1, TO JUNE 30, 1864.

	MILES.
January—From Tazewell, Tenn., to Powell's River Bridge, Tenn.,	7
January—From Knoxville, Tenn., to Strawberry Plains, Tenn.,	22
January—From Loudon, Tenn., to Kingston, Tenn.,	25
February—From Camp Burnside, Ky., to Clinton, Tenn.,	100
February—From Powell's River Bridge, Tenn., to Cumberland Gap, Ky.,	5
February—From Knoxville, Tenn., to Charleston, Tenn.,	70
March—From Columbia, Ky., to Jamestown, Ky.,	18
June—From Mount Sterling, Ky., to Lexington, Ky.,	35
June—From Burksville, Ky., to Green River Bridge, Ky.,	40
Total,	322

ABANDONED LINES REPAIRED, JANUARY 1, TO JUNE 30, 1864.

	MILES.
June—From Mount Sterling, Ky., to Lexington, Ky.,	35
June—From Burksville, Ky., to Green River Bridge, Ky.,	40
Total,	75

LINES IN OPERATION JUNE 30, 1864.

	MILES.
From Mount Sterling, Ky., to Camp Burnside, Ky.,	127
From Lebanon, Ky., to Knoxville, Tenn., *via* Danville and Cumberland Gap, Ky.,	216
From Lebanon, Ky., to Burksville, Ky.,	67
Total,	410

* * * * * *

The estimated number of despatches per month sent and received over the lines under my direction is 17,300, and, for the six months embraced in this report, 103,800. The number can not be ascertained to a positive certainty, for the reason that at times of imminent danger operators had been instructed to destroy their despatches to prevent the possibility of their falling into the hands of the enemy, and thereby valuable information given to the enemy. But the number herein stated is certainly within the actual number.

* * * * * *

One glaring abuse of the privileges of the Military Telegraph to which we are at all times more or less subject, and which ought to receive official condemnation, is the practice, too common with the officers of the army, of conducting their entire correspondence by telegraph, when the same might be much more satisfactorily transmitted through the regular mails. This practice is, as I conceive, based upon a misapprehension of the uses and purposes of the Military Telegraph. The beauty and utility of the telegraph as a means of communication is its rapidity; but, as any one can see, there must be a limit to the capacity of any telegraph line, and to have it lumbered up with long, unimportant despatches at a time when the utmost celerity is demanded for really important despatches, is a perversion of its use which ought not to be sanctioned. The prevalent idea that he who sends most despatches is most efficient, is as untrue as it is absurd.

The very efficient service which the Military Telegraph has rendered the military authorities, within this Department, has been from time to time acknowledged in an unofficial manner; but justice demands that these acknowledgements should receive official sanction. Spread out, as these lines are, over the very heart of

this State and extending to its borders, we have been enabled to give the military authorities prompt and timely notice of the approach or appearance of the enemy. In times of actual invasion or imminent danger, no persons in the employ of the Government, whether they be officers, soldiers or citizens, or with whatever branch of the service they may be connected, have been more faithful, attentive or sleepless than the Military Telegraph operator, who, after working hard all day in the discharge of his ordinary duties, often has sat by his instrument half, two-thirds, or even all night long, faithfully watching, ready to send or receive the important despatch that should give timely notice of the enemy's movements, or foil his most daring schemes.

The general condition and working of the lines under my charge has been greatly improved since the 1st of January. I doubt if lines can be found anywhere, which are not extended along railroads, upon which fewer interruptions occur from natural causes, or where less time is lost in re-opening communication when an interruption does occur, or which works clearer in all kinds of weather, than the military lines within this Department.

The raid of Morgan, who escaped from the Ohio Penitentiary, began from East Tennessee, June 1, with twenty-five hundred men. He moved *via* Paintville, Hazel Green, Owingsville, Flemingsburg and Maysville, capturing Mount Sterling, Paris, Cynthiana and Williamstown, doing much damage, and, with a detached force of three hundred under Colonel Giltner, captured General Hobson with sixteen hundred men. Concerning this, historian Greeley wrote: "It is to be hoped that they paroled their prisoners not to serve again during the war, unless on their side." General Burbridge, however, drove Morgan back, the latter losing nearly all of his command. Morgan was surprised in Greenville, East Tennessee, September 3, 1864, and killed while attempting to escape.

No other operation of any considerable forces occurred within this Department (Ohio) during the war, except the defeat of General Gillem, November 13, 1864, near Bull's Gap, whereby Breckenridge captured five hundred Federals, and the expedition under Generals Stoneman and Burbridge, organized by direction of General Thomas, to penetrate South-western Virginia. Stoneman with four thousand, two hundred men, started

on the 9th of December, and moving as far east as Wythesville, Va., destroyed the railroad, salt and lead works, seven railroad trains, a vast quantity of ammunition and much other property, and captured many prisoners and ten pieces of artillery, driving Breckenridge's remaining troops into North Carolina. Operator E. T. Chapman, who had served at Fortress Monroe and elsewhere in the East, accompanied this expedition as operator and cipherer. His report of his operations is as follows:

LEXINGTON, January 2, 1865.

CAPTAIN W. L. GROSS, A. Q. M. and Asst. Supt. Mil. Telegraph:

CAPTAIN:—I have the honor to submit the following report of Major General Stoneman's raid into Western Virginia, so far as relates to the operations on rebel telegraph lines. We entered Bristol on the morning of the 14th of December, at two o'clock, capturing without resistance, the property of the Virginia & Tennessee Railroad, all Government property and the telegraph office on a line of which, Mr. Morris, of Richmond was President. Our arrival was so unexpected that the telegraph operator, Mr. Fred Montgomery, formerly of Lynchburg, and the book-keeper were taken prisoners while engaged in playing cards in their office. By order of the General commanding, I took charge of all books, papers and other property belonging to the telegraph company. A main battery (Grove's) was located here and was in tolerable good order, their only deficiency being glass tumblers, in lieu of which, they used earthen jars. Brevet Major General Burbridge had, previous to our arrival, at Bristol, instructed me to make any rebel operator whom we might capture, do all the telegraphic manipulating, and in case he said anything over the line not dictated by me, to shoot him instantly. At eight A. M., the hour for opening their offices for business, Abingdon called Bristol and asked if any "Yanks" were, or had been there. From the fact that a party of Confederate soldiers had escaped capture and gone to Abingdon, I deemed it best to send the following despatch: "A small Yankee scout appeared in town this morning about two o'clock, remained but a few moments and retreated in great haste toward Kingsport, Tenn." A similar inquiry was made by Lynchburg, to whom the same answer was given, when the business of the day was commenced, Abingdon and Lynchburg sending a great number of messages to rebel Government officials (supposed to be at Bristol) and private citizens.

Among the despatches on file in the office when I entered, were some from General Duke to Breckenridge, Breckenridge to Duke, and Vaughn and Duke to Breckenridge, which, together with the information obtained over the line during our occupation of the office gave us full and accurate information of the enemy's strength, position and intended movements. I may here state that while working the line, I received an Associated Press report from Richmond and also General Breckenridge's orders from the Confederate War Department.

From what I saw of the telegraph line, it was well constructed, and according to Mr. Montgomery, the rebel operator, the best working line in the Confederacy. The wire was about No. ten, and insulated with glass "egg" insulators. The main battery was about thirty cups.

At three (3) P. M., all Government railroad and telegraph property was fired, when we proceeded toward Abingdon, arriving there about midnight. I proceeded at once to the telegraph office, but the operator had left. We however, captured the instrument and one very important despatch from Duke to Breckenridge. As nothing could now be done in the way of telegraphing, the rebels being apprised of our approach, we proceeded to destroy the line. Owing to the limited facilities for transportation we were obliged to destroy all the telegraph instruments. After leaving Abingdon, a portion of the command proceeded to Wythesville, where they captured and destroyed an instrument and battery. After our fight with Breckenridge, near Marion, we proceeded to Saltville, at which place there was no telegraph office.

From Mr. Montgomery I found that commercial operators in the Confederacy were receiving two hundred dollars (Confederate money) per month; army operators ninety dollars and rations. In conclusion, I have the satisfaction of saying that the General commanding acknowledged to me that the *success of the expedition was attributable in a great degree to the information derived from the rebel telegraph line.* Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

E. T. CHAPMAN, *Operator.*

Captain Gross officially reported that "there can be little doubt that the entire success of the expedition resulted from the invaluable information as to the position and numbers of the enemy, which Mr. Chapman obtained while holding the telegraph office at Bristol. For several hours he held the office while despatches

were passing to and from General Breckenridge and his subordinates, which Chapman carefully copied and laid before General Stoneman."

Nothing else occurred to telegraphers within this Department during the year, requiring special mention, excepting the operators' strike, mentioned in a chapter on the *status* of military operators; the presentation by the telegraphers in his department, to Captain Gross, of a beautiful sword, sash, belt, revolver, flask, pair of spurs and gauntlets, costing two hundred and seventy-five dollars; and a dash by guerrillas into Danville, Ky., driving Gross and Chapman into the woods, where they eluded the enemy. Perhaps other operators were driven from their posts; such incursions were at least threatened along the whole line every week in the year.

CHAPTER XI.

THE FORT DONELSON LINE.—BECKWITH DISMISSED FOR OBEYING GENERAL GRANT'S ORDERS; IS REINSTATED.—INTERFERENCE WITH CIPHERS AND CIPHER OPERATORS BY STAFF AND OTHER OFFICERS FORBIDDEN.—ATLANTA CAMPAIGN TELEGRAPHS.—VARIOUS BATTLES.—A TERRIBLE ACCIDENT.—A STRANGE BUT PROVIDENTIAL PREMONITION.—CONFEDERATE RAID INTO EAST AND MIDDLE TENNESSEE.—ATLANTA TAKEN.

Although the last chapter concerning affairs in this Department included all noteworthy *army* operations occurring during the last six months of 1863, and this one will record those of the succeeding year, yet it is deemed proper to commence retrospectively, so far as concerns the military telegraph, in that district through which the line ran that connected Clarksville, Fort Donelson and Smithland, with Cairo, Ill., and Nashville, Tenn. Our last particular mention of this line was in connection with the news of the battle of Stone River. When Rosecrans' Department was enlarged, in the summer of 1863, to include territory east of the Tennessee, as far north as the Ohio, Captain Fuller's jurisdiction over the Fort Donelson wire ceased, and VanDuzer's obtained. He at once recalled W. R. Plum from Columbus, Ky., and placed him in charge of the line south-east of Paducah, with directions to make it more reliable than it had proved—a command easily given, but difficult to execute, as the line for fully one hundred miles ran through a densely wooded country, sparsely inhabited and frequented by guerrillas, not to mention other troubles, such as the destruction of miles of line at once by sleet. H. J. Fish, and later, H. W. Nichols operated at Paducah, and E. G. Fish at Smithland; A C. Van Gilder, at Fungo; J. R. Thompson, at Fort Henry; John Q. Mason and Richard H. Elliott, at Fort Donelson, and J. J. Wilson at Clarksville, on this line. July 17, Fort Henry was abandoned by the

Federals, and poor Thompson, who was dying of consumption, resigned. Mason, one of the best operators in the Department and who had, as a member of the Chicago Mercantile Battery, participated in the Tallahatchie march and the battles of Chickasaw Bluffs and Arkansas Post, being a detailed operator, was sent to Fort Donelson, because the army regulations would not allow him enough to pay expenses of living in Nashville, where VanDuzer preferred to employ him. As it was necessary to have a test station in the neighborhood of Fort Henry, little Charley Bush opened an office at the house of one Phillips, the only Union resident in that section.

Three times Plum rode over the route of the line, accompanied only by a division repairer. The second time, after he and repairer Joice, a citizen of this section, had inspected forty miles in one day, stopping in the evening at a house three miles from Phillips' and connecting his instrument, he was urged to continue on to Phillips' by Bush, who offered to get up a dance in his honor, but as it was too dark to see the line, the invitation was fortunately declined. Very early the next morning, Jack Hinston's guerrillas captured Bush and Phillips, destroyed the telegraph and decamped with their prisoners. Repairer Johnson, located there, started east by daylight to repair the line, which had been cut the night before, and thus escaped certain death, as Hinston would surely have killed any native captured in the federal service. Shortly after Hinston left, Plum and Joice arrived at Phillips', and, repairing the line, telegraphed Colonel Brott, at Fort Donelson for cavalry to pursue Hinston, but Brott's few mounted men, he replied, were already *en route* for Phillips'. All day they were awaited, but came not, and it was decided by the three, Johnson having returned, to remain over night. Their horses were, consequently, hid in the woods. About dark, the tramp of horses crossing a rivulet near by was heard. Joice went to ascertain the cause, and reported guerrillas. The three could not defend the house, such was its construction, and Johnson was unarmed, so they fled to a fence corner near the woods, within hailing distance of the house where old Mrs. Phillips remained. There was a pale moonlight and nearly all night the tramp of horses was heard, sometimes close, at others distant. One of the three watched while the

others slept. It was Plum's turn about one A. M. After an hour's listening and frequently punching Johnson to moderate his snoring, which was extremely provoking, he saw what appeared to be a man a little in front, motionless, but apparently staring right at the trio. With an understanding that neither was to fire until sure of discovery, Joice, who on being awakened, declared they were discovered, crept to the left and Plum to the right, each with cocked revolver, intent on taking the enemy on the flanks; cautiously each neared the enemy; their hearts crowding Adam's apple and beating the advance. A brave charge was saved, by the discovery that the enemy was a wooden man.

Plum in the retreat from the house, at Joice's request, had discarded his white straw hat. Mosquitoes attacked by regiments, brigades, divisions, corps and armies, Johnson sounding the war-whoop; it was dreadful. The dull tramp of horses and an occasional voice or shrill whistle, was enough, without the steady attack of these insects. The next morning Mrs. Phillips said the guerrillas had disturbed her, but of course offered no violence. The operator and repairers then proceeded to the Fort. Some days after, Bush returned paroled, having walked fifty miles barefoot and without coat. Hinston stole his coat, boots and eighty dollars in money. Joice, Johnson and another repairer were subsequently, but at different times, killed while in the service on this line. James Maloney, another repairer was captured by Hinston near Cumberland City, not far from Clarksville.

On one occasion, the chief operator and thirty men left the Fort at eight P. M., to make a night attack on the guerrillas, but returned the next morning without having found them. At another, with a like force, he rode fifty miles one day and forty the next to come up with them, but they crossed the Tennessee River at Chaudits Landing half an hour too soon. Scarcely had the troopers returned to Chaudits, when a force under Captain Bush, arrived from Smithland, and taking the Fort Donelson party for the guerrillas, Bush said "Now we have them, prepare for action," and was about to charge, when the operator dismounted, laid aside his arms and waving his white handkerchief ran quickly to them, where with difficulty he succeeded in con-

vincing Bush that the Donelson party were Unionists. Thus another of those unfortunate mistakes whereby friends destroy one another was barely avoided. At another time, operator Van Gilder and repairer Smith were driven from Fungo into concealment in the woods.

Notwithstanding these and similar vexations, Captain Van Duzer officially reported in November, 1863, as follows:

> On the fifteenth of the same month (June) the charge of the line from Clarksville to Paducah, was given to me, and during June I succeeded by the aid of Mr. W. R. Plum, chief operator, and by putting in a set of repeaters at Fort Donelson, and increasing the battery, in getting that line in condition that it could be depended on as a means of communication with the North and West; a condition in which it yet remains.

After Plum was ordered to Chattanooga, in May, 1864, John P. Lathrop took charge of that line and the one from Clarksville to Hopkinsville, built by Burnside's order, in June, 1863, in which charge, Lathrop was greatly assisted by that excellent foreman of repairers, William Moak, but more especially by the following order, printed, and circulated along the line:

HEAD-QUARTERS DISTRICT OF TENNESSEE,
NASHVILLE, TENN., July 7th, 1864.

Special Orders No. 158.

EXTRACT:

* * * The telegraph line between Nashville and Smithland being continually molested by guerrillas, and other evil disposed persons, the disloyal citizens living within five miles of the line, in either direction, will hereafter be held responsible for its preservation; and whenever the wire is broken or otherwise injured, such disloyal citizens may be assessed to pay damages and required to make all necessary repairs, or assist in making them when notified. The citizens can and must prevent the continual breaking of the line.

By command of Major General Rosecrans.

B. H. POLK,
Major and Ass't Adj't Genl.

Up to early in May, 1864, no movement of special moment occurred in the Department not hereinbefore noted, except the advance of the Army of the Cumberland, so as fairly to locate

the enemy in front of Dalton, Ga. On the 18th of March, General Grant, as Lieutenant General, was invested with the command of all of the armies of the United States, and going East a month later, he left to Sherman the command of the Military Division of the Mississippi, which extended westward to and included the Department of Arkansas, under Steele, whose headquarters were at Little Rock. Sherman was in telegraphic communication thereto *via* Fort Donelson, Cairo and St. Louis, and also *via* Louisville and St. Louis, thence through the Boston Mountains to Fort Smith, and along the river to the State Capital.

Before General Grant left Nashville, where he located his head-quarters shortly after the battle of Missionary Ridge, he had another difference with the Chief of the Military Telegraph. Late in December, 1863, Grant went to Knoxville to arrange with the Department Commander to drive Longstreet from East Tennessee and omitted to take his cipher operator, Beckwith, with him. Being overtaken by cipher telegrams, which he could not translate, he naturally felt much annoyed, and on his return to Nashville, where Beckwith was with the only key of that number in the Division, at the suggestion, it is said, of Colonel Comstock, of Grant's staff, he ordered Beckwith to impart the secret to that officer, but the operator protesting that he would like first to communicate with Colonel Stager, the General replied, "Give Comstock a copy first, then if you like, you can tell Stager what you have done;" whereupon Beckwith handed Comstock the key to *study out* and at once advised his chief, which resulted in an interesting correspondence, but before giving which, we will exhibit a recent order which was unknown to General Grant when he directed Beckwith as above. General Grant always acted a reasonably independent part, but it is believed he never purposed disobedience.

WAR DEPARTMENT,
WASHINGTON CITY, January 1st, 1864.

ORDERED:

That the cipher books issued by the Superintendent of Military Telegraphs be entrusted only to the care of *telegraph experts*, selected for the duty by the Superintendent of Telegraphs, and approved and *appointed* by the Secretary of War for duty at the

respective head-quarters of the Military Departments, and to accompany the armies in the field. The ciphers furnished for this purpose are not to be imparted to any one, but will be kept by the operator to whom they are entrusted, in strict confidence, and he will be held responsible for their privacy and proper use. They will neither be copied nor used by any other person, without special permission from the Secretary of War. Generals commanding will report to the War Department any default of duty by the cipher operator, but will not allow any staff or other officer to interfere with the operators in the discharge of their duties.

By order of the Secretary of War. E. D. TOWNSEND,
Official: T. S. BOWERS, *A A. G.* *A. A. G.*

UNITED STATES MILITARY TELEGRAPH, WAR DEPARTMENT,
Washington, D. C., January 21, 1864.

MAJOR GENERAL H. W. HALLECK,
General-in-Chief, Washington:

I beg leave to offer the following in explanation of my message to Captain Bruch, referred to in General Grant's communication of last evening. The information furnished me led me to believe that the request of the staff officer for copy of the cipher was without General Grant's authority, and as a new cipher had been arranged expressly for Mr. Beckwith's use at General Grant's head-quarters, and the order of the Secretary of War, recently issued, that the operators for this duty should be held responsible for strict privacy in its use, I indited the message referred to, not thinking it would come in conflict with General Grant's orders or wishes—the General having recently expressed his entire satisfaction with Mr. Beckwith's services I am extremely mortified at the result, as my only desire was to furnish the most reliable means of communication to General Grant, with the War Department. The new cipher was arranged with the view of being used by telegraph experts, and, it is believed, can not be used with any success by other than telegraphers. A great number of errors have been made by staff officers working ciphers, owing to their lack of experience in telegraphic characters, and it is believed that greater accuracy can be secured by placing ciphers in the hands of experts selected for this duty. The new cipher differs in many respects from those formerly used, and the one arranged for General Grant should not be known by any other party; hence my anxiety to keep it in Beckwith's hands. I sincerely

regret that General Grant is led to believe that it is willful interference on my part. I am, General, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

ANSON STAGER,
Col. and Supt. Mil. Tel.

HEAD-QUARTERS OF THE ARMY.
Washington, January 22, 1864.

MAJOR GENERAL GRANT, Chattanooga:

I enclose herewith a copy of a note from Colonel Stager, in regard to his instructions to Mr. Beckwith respecting the new cipher. Your telegrams in regard to Lieutenant Colonel Comstock's orders to Mr. Beckwith have been submitted to the Secretary of War. It was known that the contents of telegrams communicated by means of existing ciphers, had been made public without authority. As these ciphers had been communicated to a number of persons, the Department was unable to discover the delinquent individual. To obviate this difficulty, a new and very complicated cipher was prepared for communications between you and the War Department, which, by the direction of the Secretary of War, was to be communicated to only two individuals—one at your head-quarters, and one in the War Department. It was to be communicated to no one else—not even to me or any member of my staff. Mr. Beckwith, who was sent to your head-quarters, was directed by the Secretary of War to communicate the cipher to *no one*. In obeying Colonel Comstock's orders, he disobeyed the Secretary, and has been dismissed. He should have gone to prison, if Colonel Comstock had seen fit to put him there. Instead of forcing the cipher from him in violation of the orders of the War Department, Colonel Comstock should have reported the facts of the case here, for the information of the Secretary of War, who takes the personal supervision and direction of the Military Telegraphs. On account of this cipher having been communicated to Colonel Comstock, the Secretary has directed another to be prepared in its place, which is to be communicated *to no one, no matter what his rank*, without his special authority. The Secretary does not perceive the necessity for communicating a special cipher, intended only for telegrams to the War Department, to members of your staff, any more than to members of my staff, or to the staff officers of other Generals commanding geographical departments. All your communications with others were conducted through the ordinary cipher. It was intended that Mr. Beckwith should accompany you wherever you

required him — transportation being furnished for that purpose. If by any casualty he should be separated from you, communications would be kept up by the ordinary cipher until the vacancy could be supplied. It is to be regretted that Colonel Comstock interfered with the orders of the War Department in this case. As stated in former instructions, if any telegraphic employé should not give satisfaction, he should be reported, and if there be a pressing necessity, he may be suspended; but as the Corps of Telegraphic Operators receive their instructions directly from the Secretary of War, their instructions should not be interfered with, except under very extraordinary circumstances, which should be immediately reported. Very respectfully, etc., H. W. HALLECK,

General-in-Chief.

P. S. Colonel Stager is the confidential agent of the Secretary of War, and directs all telegraphic matters under his orders.

H. W. H.

HEAD-QUARTERS MILITARY DIVISION OF THE MISSISSIPPI,
Nashville, Tenn., February 4, 1864.

MAJOR GENERAL H. W. HALLECK,
General-in-Chief, Washington, D. C.:

Your letter of the twenty-second, enclosing a copy of Colonel Stager's, of the twenty-first, to you, is received. I have also circular, or order, dated January 1, 1864, post-marked Washington, January 23, and received on the twenty-ninth. I will state that Beckwith is one of the best of men. He is competent and industrious. In the matter for which he has been dismissed, he only obeyed my orders, and could not have done otherwise than he did and remained. Beckwith has always been employed at head-quarters, as an operator, and I have never thought of taking him with me, except when head-quarters were moved. On the occasion of my going to Knoxville, I received Washington despatches which I could not read until my return to this place. To remedy this for the future, I directed Colonel Comstock to acquaint himself with this cipher. Beckwith desired to telegraph Colonel Stager on the subject before complying with my directions. Not knowing of any order defining who and who alone could be entrusted with the Washington cipher, I then ordered Beckwith to give it to Colonel Comstock, and to inform Colonel Stager of the fact that he had done so I had no thought in this matter of violating any order, or even wish, of the Secretary of War. I could see no reason why I was not as capable

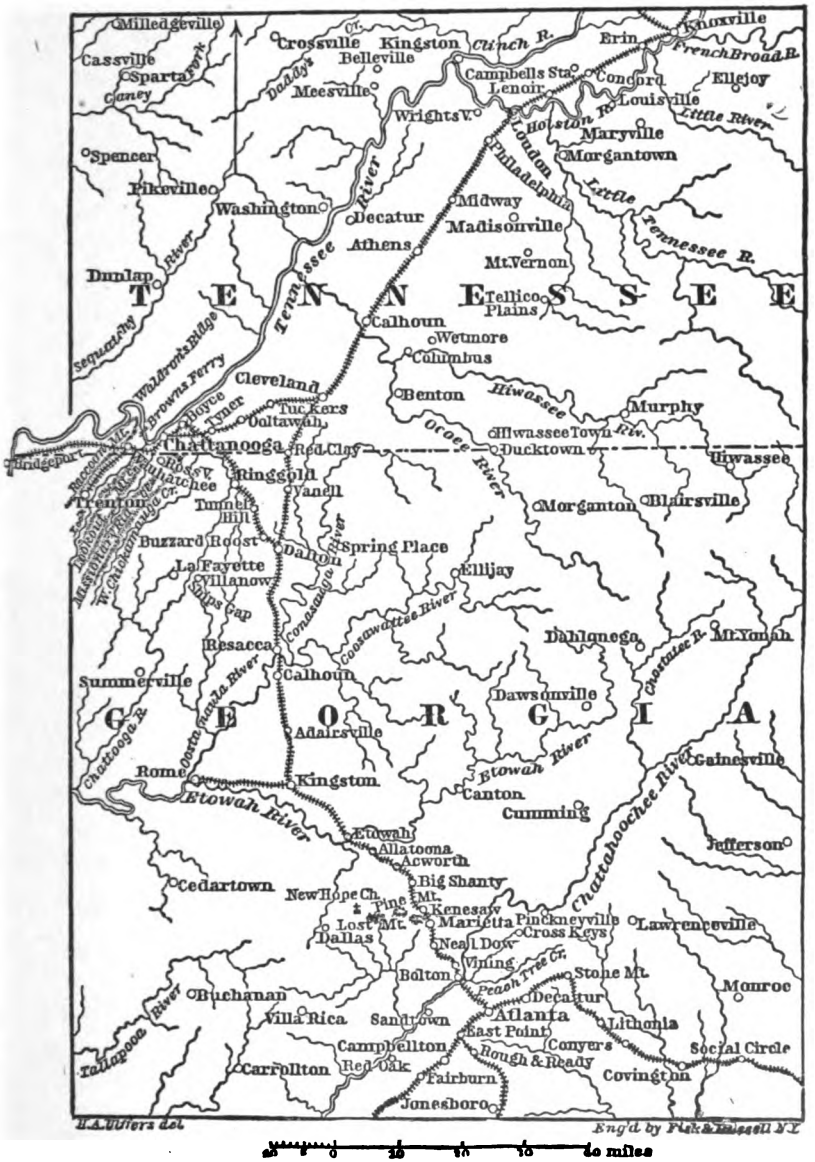
of selecting a proper person to entrust with this secret as Colonel Stager; in fact, thought nothing further of the matter than that Colonel Stager had his operators under such discipline that they were afraid to obey orders from any one but himself, without knowing first his pleasure. Beckwith has been dismissed for obeying my orders. A better man can not be selected for the position. I respectfully ask that Beckwith be restored. When Colonel Stager's directions were received here, the cipher had already been communicated. The order was signed by himself and not by direction of the Secretary of War. It is not necessary for me to state that I am no stickler for form, but will obey any order or wish from any of my superiors, no matter how conveyed, if I know or only think it comes from them. In this instance, I supposed Colonel Stager was acting for himself, and without the knowledge of any one else.

I am, General, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

U. S. GRANT, *Maj. Gen.*

Thus amicably ended the matter, Beckwith being duly reinstated.

During the five months that intervened between the battles of Missionary Ridge and Lookout Mountain and the advance of Sherman's forces into Georgia, all that energy, ingenuity, patriotism, art and wealth could do to strengthen and prepare the three armies concentrating at Chattanooga, for movement against the graneries, the workshops and communications and the Confederate army of Tennessee, was done and well done quickly. With Grant at the head of the armies to second intelligently Sherman's demands, he was enabled to assemble at Chattanooga, well equipped and provided in all respects, the Army of the Cumberland, under Thomas, numbering sixty thousand, seven hundred and seventy-three; the Army of the Tennessee, recently along the line of Huntsville Railroad, under McPherson, numbering twenty-four thousand, four hundred and sixty-five, and the Army of the Ohio, under Schofield, who succeeded Foster, the successor of Burnside, numbering thirteen thousand, five hundred and fifty-nine. These armies had two hundred and fifty-four guns, and were about to be reinforced by additional cavalry when they advanced. The railroad *via* Huntsville and Decatur to Nashville, commonly spoken of at Chattanooga as "Around the Horn," was re-opened, as was also that



THEATRE ABOUT KNOXVILLE, CHATTANOOGA AND ATLANTA.

from Chattanooga to Knoxville. In January, 1864, the line between Pulaski, Tenn., and Flint River Bridge *via* Athens, Decatur and Huntsville, Ala., was rebuilt and a new line constructed between Chattanooga and Ringgold, Ga., the Union advanced position. In February, Captain Gross turned over to VanDuzer the property appertaining to, and the men employed upon, the line on the East Tennessee & Georgia Railroad. He extended it up the valley as Longstreet withdrew, and opened offices at various points. In March he re-built the line from Knoxville to Jacksboro and constructed a new one from Jacksboro to a point between there and Cumberland Gap, where he met Captain Gross' builders, thus completing a new wire *via* Cumberland Gap to Louisville direct, and giving three wires from Chattanooga to Louisville. In April, VanDuzer added a third wire to the line between Chattanooga and Stevenson which, connecting with the wire *via* Decatur, gave three lines from Chattannooga to Nashville. He also established a wire from Huntsville to Whitesburg, Ala.

Thus prepared, on the 28th of April, General Sherman, leaving a part of his staff at head-quarters in Nashville, where C. W. Jacques operated, started for Chattanooga, accompanied by F. S. VanValkenburg, there to await the signal from General Grant, who was in person at the head of the Army of the Potomac, which was about to move upon those sanguinary fields where it suffered such frightful losses. On his way to his army, Sherman received this order by telegraph:

CULPEPER, VA., April 28th, 1864.

MAJOR GENERAL SHERMAN:

Get your forces up so as to move by the 5th of May.

U. S. GRANT, *Lieut. Gen.*

From Chickamauga to Mission Ridge, was an anxious *hiatus;* a season, as we have seen, of doubts, fears, starvings and solicitous misgivings; one of energetic preparation however, fraught, as shown, with high honors and glorious victory. From Mission Ridge to the advance of all the armies, in May, 1864, was another *interim* of ceaseless preparation. Men and war material were furnished almost as certainly as requested. Life and treasure were not too dear to throw into the balance against dis-

union, and when the time arrived for Sherman to be ready to move, he was ready and moved.

The Federals in apt time began their difficult march against the forty-five thousand troops under J. E. Johnston, acting on the defensive. Captain VanDuzer on his part was well prepared, having experienced builders under Solomon Palmer and N. S. Townsend. With Sherman, went operator F. S. VanValkenburg; with Thomas, Jesse H. Bunnell, Cass G. Sholes, John Wilbur and Joseph Anderson; with McPherson, Wm. B. Somerville and later, Jacques; with Schofield, G. W. Wilson. C. D. Whitney was with the cavalry, and Wm. Patterson and John Lonergan were general utility men, for whom there was constant demand. VanDuzer himself, accompanied the army, which mainly advanced direct against the enemy in front of Dalton, but McPherson's command passed through Snake Creek Gap to destroy the railroad in Johnston's rear at Resaca. It is believed he might have succeeded in this, and thus have forced a general battle on an equal field, but Johnston headed off the movement and withdrawing, after inflicting heavy loss on the main body of the Unionists, reached Resaca May 13, where to the sixteenth, conflicts ensued resulting in great sacrifice and in Johnston's retreating further. The railroad was quickly repaired, for by it Sherman's army was supplied throughout the campaign. The telegraph accompanied the advance of the forces from Ringgold, and offices were opened as near the front and Department headquarters as possible, viz.: at Tunnel Hill, during the reconnoissance of Rocky Face Ridge and Buzzard Roost Gap, and pending the flank movement by Snake Creek Gap; at Dalton, within two hours of the evacuation of that place by the rebels; at Tilton and at a point on the railroad near the Union left, during the three days' fighting in front of Resaca. Jacques coming to the front with Lewis B. Spellman, opened the Dalton office.

About this time occurred a most terrible railroad accident. The water tank where engines took their supply, was about a mile north of Dalton and up a heavy grade, on account of which, the practice prevailed of detaching the engine at the Dalton station and taking it alone to the tank for water. A large train filled with wounded soldiers from the Resaca battle field arrived at Dalton, and the engineer started his engine up the grade for

water, although he knew that the engine of another train lying at Dalton had preceded him. When near the tank he discovered the forward one returning, and to avoid a collision, reversed his engine, opened the throttle, and both he and the fireman jumped off. The two engines met without injury, when the south engine, under full steam, backed down the hill, acquiring a fearful momentum in the mile it ran before plunging into the train it had just left, crushing car after car, and mangling unto death many wounded and helpless soldiers.

A few days later, Jacques relieved Somerville, whose health was failing, and Charles Spellman assisted his brother. On the seventeenth, the army again advanced, a part arriving near Kingston the next day, and on the nineteenth, another portion at Cassville, after engaging the enemy spiritedly near Adairsville.

A good story is told at the expense of Cass Sholes in connection with the Adairsville fight. Cass never having witnessed a battle, requested VanValkenburg to send an orderly for him when one was in prospect. Accordingly Sholes was sent for and Van proceeded to baptize him with fire. After changing from one bad position to a worse one, the two were sitting on horse under a tree near the road, when a battery of artillery was planted abreast of them. In their rear, also mounted, were two general officers and their staffs. So many horsemen in an open field, of course drew the fire of the enemy's guns. A canister shot exploded in the tree directly overhead of the operators, scattering all around and wounding several staff officers and horses. It is possible that Sholes left first, but more probable that both operators took time by the forelock. As soon as distance lent enchantment, Sholes as pale as death, turned to Van and inquired if he looked white. Van laughed inordinately and replied "Yes," to which Sholes rejoined, "I am teetotally cow-kicked if I can't taste lead." Indeed, he imagined he felt a bullet in his stomach. To this day, he stoutly asserts that he did taste lead.

At Cassville, Johnston was reinforced by French's Division of Polk's Corps, but being dissuaded from giving battle, retired across the Etowah to Allatoona Pass, a position too strong for Sherman to attack. Accordingly, he moved to the right, with

twenty days' rations, meeting the enemy at Dallas, and gradually extending his army to the left, struck the railroad again, June 5, after a severe but not general engagement. The enemy was now posted on Kenesaw, Lost and Pine Mountains. The telegraph had been opened at or near Sherman's head-quarters every night during the march from the Oostanaula to the Etowah, and at Kingston it was halted by direction, and communication had by courier with the army during the movement by Burnt Hickory and Dallas, to turn the Allatoona Range—a delay of about twelve days. Early in June, a branch line was opened from Kingston to Rome, and when the enemy retired to Kenesaw, Palmer advanced the line, first, to Ackworth where the army was resting, and then to Big Shanty where the Federals confronted the enemy and prepared for a direct assault. Field lines were quickly run along the entire front of the troops, from General McPherson's head-quarters on the left, to Schofield's on the right, with intermediate offices at Sherman's and Thomas' and such other points as Sherman wished. This line was from day to day extended and retracted, reaching out a loop to the signal station on Pine Mountain when that was taken, and another to Sherman's field quarters close to Kenesaw; stretching away to the right with Schofield as he tried in vain to turn the rebel left; pushing up after the assaulting column on the twenty-seventh, thus enabling, says VanDuzer, "General Sherman at all times to communicate with his subordinate commanders." It was worked until the enemy abandoned his position on Kenesaw Mountain, when the whole Union force was pushed forward in pursuit to Marietta, Ga.

Reports of Union losses show 9,299 killed, wounded and missing, during the month of May, and that the Confederates during the same period lost, killed and wounded, 5,393, to which should be added, according to an estimate by General Sherman, 3,245, prisoners captured by him. These figures demonstrate the character of the advance the first hundred miles into Georgia, nearly every mile of which was the scene of strife, and every day added to the sacrifice. At Ackworth, Sherman's losses were made up to him by reinforcements. Johnston's army then numbered 64,456. June 10, Sherman advanced to Big Shanty, at the foot of the Confederate strongholds, of which Kenesaw was

the principal. Here General Sherman was extremely anxious for the completion of his field telegraph, and asked Townsend when it would be at his quarters, to which he answered, "In an hour and one-half," to make sure not to disappoint the Commander; but in thirty minutes Sherman heard the instrument near his tent, and Townsend thought he was under a heavy fire when Sherman asked: "What did you mean, sir, by telling me 'an hour and one-half?'" After that, the shortest, instead of the longest, time was given to such inquiries.

General Sherman, in his "Memoirs," says:

"The 27th of June was fixed as the day for the attempt" (to break the rebel center), "and in order to oversee the whole and be in close communication with all parts of the army, I had a place cleared on the top of a hill to the rear of Thomas' center, and had the telegraph wires laid to it. * * * About nine, A. M., of the day appointed, the troops moved to the assault, and all along our lines, for ten miles, a furious fire of artillery and musketry was kept up. At all points the enemy met us with determined courage and in great force.

The assault, lasting two hours and a half, was a decided failure, the Federals losing twenty-five hundred to the enemy's eight hundred.

By this time, it had become necessary to send the wounded back as far as Nashville. When great calamities are averted on the brink of their consummation, the saved, regardless of former conviction concerning an overruling Providence, instinctively bless God for the rescue. Instances of premonitory impressions, resulting beneficially, however rare and unaccountable, are well authenticated. As a long train, laden with wounded from Chattanooga, moved northward, Robert B. Hoover, day operator at Normandy, Tenn., was impressed more and more deeply, with the coming of darkness and the train, that some great catastrophe, what, he knew not, was impending. Every train that passed north carried wounded men, and regular hospital cars were fitted up not unlike sleeping coaches, except that a common car was so arranged with hammocks and bunks as to accommodate the largest possible number. On the night in question, Colonel Ketchum, of New York, Commandant at Normandy,

called Hoover's attention to the fact that the north-bound midnight train had for several nights past failed to stop as ordered; wherefore, Hoover directed the night operator to stop the train with a red light, and about nine o'clock retired to his cot in the baggage-room of the depot. A hundred nights before he had slept peacefully and soundly, without even knowing of the passage of trains; but this night a feeling of nervousness and suspense made sleep impossible. The measured tramp of the guard along the outer platform, the challenge of relieving patrols and the plaintive voice of the whip-poor-will attracted his attention. Having fullest confidence in James A. Howard, the night operator, Hoover was, nevertheless, so keenly persuaded that the train *must be stopped*, as to rise from his cot and await the coming of this midnight express. Finally, an engine whistled for a water station half way down the seven-mile grade, at the foot of which lay Normandy. About five hundred yards south of the office, the road crossed Duck River and when the locomotives were not to stop at the station, they customarily whistled off brakes while crossing the bridge, and naturally enough Hoover was listening intent for the signal. A hospital train came thundering down the grade. It struck the bridge, and two sharp blasts ordered off the brakes and startled Hoover, who exclaimed to his fellow operator: "Quick, Howard! the red light!" A few moments later, the train was at a dead stand by the depot. "What's wanted?" asks the conductor, as he approaches. The operators explain that the time-card required No. 7 to stop regularly, which it had neglected to do, and consequently they used the lantern. "Well, that's all right, boys," he replied, "but I am not running No. 7. Its engine gave out at Tullahoma, and my special train, full of wounded, was ordered ahead and to carry flags for No. 7. They will be along soon. There is no harm done, so good-night. Keep a sharp lookout for old Wheeler. All aboard!" As the ten coaches passed the station —coaches full of helplessness and misery—the operators watched until the rear red light was just turning the curve near the north end of the side track, when they heard first a shrill call for brakes, then a few dull thuds followed by an ominous silence, which transfixed Hoover at the station door, for he felt that whatever it was he had dreaded so many hours, had come to

pass. In a few minutes the conductor returned with his lantern, pale, but self-possessed, and looking at the boys with an expression not to be forgotten, in a husky voice, said: "Come and see what your red light saved us from." Arriving there in silence, it was discovered that in the darkness the rebels had broken the switch lock, turned the rails from the main track and fastened a bar of railroad iron across the track with a telegraph wire. The road at that point turned sharply to the left around a high rock point, while to the right was a steep embankment running down to the deep, black water of Duck River. As the conductor pointed down to the water he said: "Boys, if you had not flagged us to-night, we would have struck this obstruction at forty miles an hour, and the whole train with its three hundred sufferers would have gone down into that river." Such of the wounded as were able to walk that night crowded around the telegraphers, and, with tears of thankfulness, expressed their gratitude; but Hoover insisted that 't was not he, but an overruling Providence, that saved them.

After the Kenesaw disaster and after the June losses of seven thousand five hundred and thirty killed, wounded and missing Federals and about six thousand Confederates, the army, July 2, began a movement to the right, pursuant to a plan arranged by telegraph, for flanking Johnston out of his stronghold. General McPherson, who was to take a leading part, was in Jacques' office, in electric communication with Sherman three hours before starting, and it is probable that Thomas and Schofield also took part in the telegraphic interview. Johnston, upon discovering the movement, fell back to the Chattahoochee.

It was during these movements that W. R. Plum, long detained in Chattanooga, was ordered to the front, and stationed first on Signal Hill, overlooking the river and the three bridges across it, which were fired by the rebels July 9, the night of his arrival and after most of the enemy had crossed to the southern side. About this time VanDuzer made his annual report, wherein he wrote:

In the erection, maintenance and working of these lines, Messrs. G. W. Wilson, C. G. Eddy, F. S. VanValkenburg, Cass G. Sholes, C. W. Jacques, Joe Anderson and C. D. Whitney, operators, were

unwearied assistants, and to their hearty co-operation I owe much of the success that has attended my efforts to satisfy the demands of the armies for telegraphic communication. What the measure of that success was, I leave for others to say.

J. A. Fuller opened the office at Marietta, and soon after joined the field operators, working at the river ferries, Thomas' and Stanley's head-quarters, and Chattahoochee Bridge. Van-Valkenburg left the vicinity of Marietta for the North, after which C. G. Eddy assisted Sholes at Sherman's. On the sixteenth, Grant, having telegraphed the failure of the enemy's designs in Maryland and the consequent possibility of heavily reinforcing Johnston, Sherman moved at once to cross the river to the left of the railroad, *via* Roswell and the ferries, particularly Paice's and Power's. The railroad was immediately repaired to Vining's Station. Telegraph lines were promptly built to the right from Paice's Ferry to the Sweetwater, and to the left from Paice's to Power's Ferry, and from Marietta to Roswell—in all about forty-five miles. These lines were all constructed to facilitate the crossing of the Chattahoochee. While that movement was progressing, the few operators at the front were on duty all day and night throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth. On the twentieth, General Hood, who superseded Johnston on the seventeenth, attacked Sherman in force, but was driven to the defenses of Atlanta. On the same day the linemen crossed the river with the wire, building along the railroad to the third mile post from the city, being but three-quarters of a mile from the rebel defenses. From this point, a field line to the right and left connected the head-quarters of Generals Sherman and Thomas with those of such officers as they desired and with the points of observation established by the Signal Corps. This line extended to the left as far as the position south of the Augusta railroad which was attacked by the enemy on the twenty-second, and to the right as far as that wing was extended before the abandonment of the attack in front and the movement on Jonesboro. This line was at one time twenty miles long, and was continued in use twenty-eight days—offices having been opened and worked at twenty-three different points, more than one-half of which were exposed to the fire of the enemy.

On the twenty-second, Hood sallied forth from the city, making a fierce attack on the Federal left and rear, and on the twenty-eighth savagely assaulted the right, meeting severe repulse both days. McPherson was killed during the first attack. No officer in the army appreciated the value of the telegraph and the importance of the operator more than brave McPherson, who was pleased on all occasions to recognize its utility and to treat his operators with consideration.

General Sherman shows the Confederate losses on this campaign, during July, to have been ten thousand eight hundred and forty-one, of whom but two thousand were prisoners. The Union losses in killed, wounded and missing were nine thousand seven hundred and nineteen.

During the month, General Rousseau's cavalry destroyed many miles of railroad about Opelika, Ala., and General Garrard's did great damage to the Augusta road.

Every night the rebels threw shells over and beyond Thomas' office, but sometimes they failed to go far enough, and one killed an orderly at head-quarters, where Bunnell, Anderson and Plum then operated. Bunnell, on the sixteenth of August, resigned on account of ill health, and the service lost one of its ablest and bravest operators. Richmond Smith, fresh from the North, succeeded Bunnell as manager, to the dissatisfaction of some who had been long in the service. Thomas' was always the main or general office, and consequently was the most important.

About the middle of August, Wheeler's cavalry cut the line near Calhoun, and again about Dalton, which place was attacked, but the cavalry were held at bay until Steedman, from Chattanooga, came down and punished the rebels badly, after which they moved through East Tennessee, *via* Strawberry Plains, crossing the Clinch a few miles east of Jacksboro, and passing between Clinton and Jacksboro, crossed the Sequatchie Valley and moved on Murfreesboro, *via* McMinnville, intending to work great destruction to the Chattanooga road, while General Roddy with another force was besieging Athens with a view to operate, after its capture, against the Decatur road. It will be remembered that the telegraph route from Danville, Ky., to Knoxville, *via* the Gap, had by this time been abandoned, and a new line erected *via* Burksville, Chitwoods, Jacksboro and Clin-

ton. Wheeler's scouts cut this line south of Jacksboro before he crossed in force. James Jones was operator there, and James Palmer repairer. Palmer, approaching Clinton to repair the break, learned that the rebels had appeared on the south side of the river in force; that one soldier was drowned while attempting to swim the river to get the ferry boat at Clinton, where the negro ferryman had left it. The repairer also met a woman who had recently returned from a visit at her father's, on the south side of the river. She reported having talked at her father's house with a number of Wheeler's men, who stated that they were *en route* for Kentucky, and would cross the mountains at Jacksboro, or two miles below, at Wheeler's Gap. These reports created great excitement in Jacksboro. The few troops and male citizens there at once looked about for places of safety in the woods, leaving Jones and Palmer about the only men in the town. They kept alternate watch all night, intending to telegraph North should the enemy appear, and thus afford ample notice to the commanders in Kentucky. Superintendent Gross telegraphed Jones: "If you should have to leave there, do not go farther than to secure your safety, and return as soon as possible. Try and report where they cross the mountains;" to which Jones replied: "You may rely upon it, the rebels shall not cross the mountains without my reporting them." The rebels not appearing, Palmer was sent to learn their whereabouts. He ascertained, and reported that Wheeler's force crossed at Winter's Gap, and also the general officers, regiments and guns, and their destination. Jones telegraphed these facts, closing: "They will strike the railroad at or near Murfreesboro, Tenn., in three days from the time of crossing;" and so it proved.

Wheeler struck the railroad about Smyrna, a little north of Murfreesboro, doing a little damage, but Rousseau commanding at Nashville, and Steedman at Chattanooga, being timely warned, drove him off quickly in the direction of Lawrenceburg and Florence, where he crossed. Captain Gross acknowledged the importance of Jones' report at the time, saying, "The information which you were able to give of the numbers and direction of the invading force under the rebel General Wheeler, was promptly laid before the proper military authorities, and was the earliest information received of that force of the enemy."

No military commander however, ever thought of acknowledging this service. The telegraph operators at Smyrna, John T. Duell and his assistant were captured. Wheeler took them well on toward Florence, but being hard pressed by Rousseau, turned them loose to foot it back.

Finding the defenses of Atlanta too strong to assault, and the cavalry expeditions under McCook, Stoneman and Kilpatrick respectively, against the communicating railroad unsuccessful, or nearly so, Sherman essayed another flank movement to the right, leaving the Twentieth Army Corps at and near the Chattahoochee Bridge. During this movement, Eddy and Sholes accompanied Sherman, Whitney the cavalry, Jacques, General Howard, commanding the Army of the Tennessee, recently under McPherson, and Plum, General Thomas. Although these operators carried their instruments, their going was mainly as cipherers. No lines were built, but many miles were destroyed. The other telegraphers returned to the river. On the way to Jonesboro, cipherer Sholes while stooping at a spring to drink, lost his criptograph key; the only one used at Sherman's headquarters. It was not until some hours after the rear guard passed this point, that Sholes discovered his great loss. While wondering what the General would do to him and becoming more frightened as he pondered upon his misfortune, the brave boy determined to take his chances of capture by riding back to the spring, where he concluded the key must have dropped from his coat pocket. Mile after mile he rode, unattended and without meeting a human being. But no success attended his return, so he hastened back and stammered out to Sherman a report of his loss. Great was his relief when that officer cheeringly replied that the cipher was too old anyhow, and a new key ought to be made. That night, however, the key was returned to the operator by a member of Howard's staff, who found it at the spring. August 31, Howard's forces struck the Macon Railroad near Jonesboro, having already destroyed many miles of the West Point road, and on the same day, Stanley and Schofield to the left, also struck the Macon road. Quite a battle ensued September 1, mainly between a part of Thomas' troops and the enemy, in which ten guns and one thousand Confederates were captured. During the subsidence of this battle,

Thomas and his staff and operator, having dismounted, were sitting side by side, when a bullet passed behind each of them in a line about an inch from their necks. During the day, but before the battle, a soldier exhibited to Thomas the rim of a canteen, which, while on the soldier's person, had been pierced squarely in the center by a small cannon ball, without injuring the wearer.

The Confederates were pursued to Lovejoy, where, hearing of the evacuation of Atlanta by the corps left to hold it, Sherman declared the campaign ended and turned back to that city on the eighth. He estimates the Federal losses since leaving Chattanooga at thirty-one thousand, six hundred and eighty-seven killed, wounded and missing, and the Confederate at thirty-four thousand, nine hundred and seventy-nine.

A few hours after the enemy left Atlanta, the telegraph party at the bridge, went in with the troops and opened communication with the North, which at this time was in the throes of a Presidential canvass. The Democratic party had just resolved against "four years of failure to restore the Union by the *experiment* of war," and before the delegates had returned to their homes, the telegraph spread the news throughout the North of the capture of Atlanta and Mobile Bay. Never was rejoicing more heartfelt. Secretary of State Seward, in a public speech declared that "Sherman and Farragut have knocked the bottom out of the Chicago nominations."

As Sherman's army encamped to the east and west of Atlanta, the telegraph was connected with its parts; thus a line was built by William Patterson from Roswell, through Cross Keys and Decatur to Atlanta, and thence *via* East Point to Campbellton, with offices at head-quarters of the army corps and cavalry commanders. This work was completed almost as soon as the army encamped. Then, Superintendent VanDuzer, who had been constantly at the front for nearly five months, returned to his quarters in Nashville. Besides the operators heretofore named, employed south of Chattanooga, there were in the month of September, the following: Thomas Williams, James Bryant, John E. Clark, Alfred Winder, William H. Hartman, —— Waterhouse, N. S. Townsend, and probably some others.

Within the Department of the Cumberland there were in June, three hundred and eighty-three telegraph employés, of

whom one hundred and forty-two were operators, one hundred and forty-four laborers, sixty-three repairers, and the rest made up of foremen, clerks, teamsters, wagon-masters, wagon-makers, blacksmiths, messengers and saddlers. And there were one thousand, five hundred miles of telegraph in constant use. It was with special reference to the telegraphers' service in this campaign, that Sherman in his Memoirs, wrote:

The value of the magnetic telegraph in war cannot be exaggerated, as was illustrated by the perfect concert of action between the armies in Virginia and Georgia during 1864. Hardly a day intervened when General Grant did not know the exact state of facts with me, more than one thousand, five hundred miles away, as the wires ran. So on the field, a thin, insulated wire may be run on improvised stakes or from tree to tree, for six or more miles in a couple of hours, and I have seen operators so skillful that by cutting the wire they would receive a message with their tongues from a distant station. As a matter of course, the ordinary commercial wires along the railways form the usual telegraph lines for an army, and these are easily repaired and extended as the army advances, but each army and wing should have a small party of skilled men to put up the field wire and take it down when done. This is better far than the signal flags and torches. Our commercial telegraph lines will always supply for war enough skillful operators.

CHAPTER XII.

THE TELEGRAPH IN THE DEPARTMENT OF THE TENNESSEE (1864) AND GULF TO SEPTEMBER.—SHERMAN'S ADVANCE FROM VICKSBURG.—A PERILOUS RIDE ON A FLAT CAR.—W. S. SMITH'S RAIDING FAILURE.—FORREST'S SUCCESSES AND DEFEAT IN WEST TENNESSEE AND KENTUCKY.—FORT PILLOW MASSACRE.—CAPTURE AND REMARKABLE ESCAPE OF AN OPERATOR.—STURGIS' AND A. J. SMITH'S RAIDS.—AN OPERATOR RIDDLED WITH BUCK-SHOT.—FORREST'S DASH INTO MEMPHIS; CAPTURES AN OPERATOR; HIS EXPERIENCE.—VICKSBURG MATTERS.—GRIERSON'S RAID.—CAPTURE OF FORTS IN MOBILE BAY.

Compared with 1863, the new year (1864) opened in the Department of the Tennessee with few telegraph offices. These, operated under Captain Fuller, were located as follows: At Paducah, Ky., Edwin Peel, operator; Metropolis, Ill., Charles Wallace; Cairo, Ill., George Gallup, W. S. Lewis and Richard H. Tracy; Columbus, Ky., Jacob V. Hill and William Gibson; Union City, Tenn., Edgar B. McNairn; head-quarters, Memphis, Tenn., Lewis B. Spellman, William H. Merkley; Memphis, W. B. Somerville; R. R. depot, C. W. Pearson; Germantown, F. W. Snell; Colliersville, Edward F. Butler; LaFayette, R. B. Griffin and Wm. A. Thayer; Moscow, Chas. H. Spellman; La Grange, Peter Fowler; Grand Junction, Ellis Stone; Camp Davis, Miss., Robt. J. Hughes; Salisbury, Tenn., James Pitton; Pocahontas, Tenn., Jno. Q. Olmstead; Middleton, Tenn., Jno. O. Ingle; Chewalla, Tenn., Joseph Blish, Jr.; Corinth, Miss., Cambridge Culbertson and John J. Egan; Vicksburg, Miss., Robert S. Fowler, Samuel D. Cochran; R. R. depot, Edw. D. Butler; Black River Bridge, Stephen L. Robinson; and at Hebron, Miss., John R. Frank.

The Federal hold on West Tennessee, except along the river and the Memphis & Charleston Railroad, had for months been

nominal only. The great body of this section was given over to guerrillas, and, as if to invite organized expeditions against the river towns, it was concluded to vacate the line of the railroad also. Accordingly, Corinth was evacuated January 26, 1864; Grand Junction, the twenty-eighth; LaGrange, the twenty-ninth. In short, all east of Germantown was given up, and that also, March 26. Offices were opened at Fort Pickering and at Colonel Hoges', out on the Pigeon Roost road, a few miles from Memphis, to prevent surprises.

This was the work of General Sherman, who reached Memphis the 10th of January, bent on concentrating there a cavalry force, seven thousand strong, under General W. Sooy Smith, to overwhelm Forrest, while he, Sherman, with McPherson's Vicksburg forces and two divisions of Hurlbut's, moved east from Vicksburg against Lieutenant General Polk. In a great measure both expeditions failed. John J. Egan, operator, went with the army from Vicksburg, but found little to do. He reported the capture of Frank C. and Mervin Jones, Confederate States operators, who took the oath of allegiance and announced their purpose of going North. Sherman held them as prisoners of war. Operator Compton was also captured and brought to Vicksburg. Nat. Walton escaped from Clinton with his instruments, two hours before the Union troops arrived.

The expedition, consisting of about twenty-three thousand men, left Vicksburg, February 3, and was feebly retarded by Polk's force, exceeding ten thousand men. Meridian, Miss., was reached, and great destruction was wrought wherever the army went, especially to the railroads. Finally, the troops returned leisurely, without being met by the cavalry force from Memphis, which was expected at Meridian.

When Sherman passed Jackson, the anxiety at Meridian was indicated by hasty and general preparations for departure. Even the telegraph material, not in actual use, was packed. On the night before the evacuation, Major Fleming, General Superintendent of the Mobile & Ohio Railroad, arrived with an engine, one coach and box cars. Fleming and the telegraphers expected to leave at ten, A. M., the next day, but Sherman had pressed his cavalry forward during the night, and by daylight Confederate General Adams had passed through the city, in retreat. Emmet

Howard, operator there, snatched his instruments from their places, connected the through lines, and hurriedly boarded the train. Then the engineer, probably fearing ambush, refused to run the locomotive, but the yard-master consented after an anxious delay. The train moved southward with great rapidity, passing the three-mile post just as Federal cavalry rode up, after which the trip was uneventful to Enterprise, and thence south of the Alabama line, where an office was opened in a box car.

When Sherman retired, Superintendents David Flanery, from the South, and James Pressly, from the North, restored the line to Meridian, using for that purpose every piece of wire, however short, that could be found. Not long after this, a most disastrous freshet washed portions of the Mobile & Ohio Railroad in scores of places, and many bridges south of Meridian were carried away. For miles nothing could be seen above the water along the road but the iron rails and narrow embankment supporting them, and in some places the rails were held together only by fish-bar connections. Of course, the telegraph was much damaged, many poles being carried away. To ascertain the extent of the injury, Superintendent Pressly and operator Howard left Meridian for Mobile, with orders for the use of engines and hand-cars wherever found. At Enterprise, an engine was obtained, and the driver prevailed upon to quit a saloon and run the locomotive to the first break. Pressly, Howard and a Mr. David Cummings boarded a flat car attached to the tender. The moment the engineer mounted the engine and opened the throttle, his condition was discovered; but it was too late, and and the little train was soon moving at a speed of fifty miles an hour. What made it worse was the fact that the engine was pushing, not drawing the empty flat, which afforded nothing except a few loose standards or uprights along its sides to hold on by. It is believed that this situation was better calculated to an inspection of one's sins than the telegraph. At one time, Pressly proposed jumping. Cummings tried to reach the tender, but the oscillations of the car made this difficult and dangerous for a novice. However, he finally succeeded, and, throwing the engineer aside, the train was brought to a stand. It stopped within fifty feet of the Chicahasaha River, the bridge over which had been washed away. Had Cummings been a few seconds

later in reaching the engine, none of the party would have lived to relate the story of that dreadful ride.

Wm. Sooy Smith's expedition, which was to co-operate with Sherman's march on Meridian, left Memphis one day after it was due at Meridian. Operators Lew. B. Spellman and Fred W. Snell accompanied Generals Smith and Grierson, respectively. The command returned February 26, having met Forrest, who with an inferior force, near West Point, defeated and sent it back to Memphis in hot haste, with a loss, according to a Confederate writer, of six hundred killed and wounded, and three hundred prisoners. Forrest's loss is stated at fifty killed and one hundred and fifty wounded.

It was now Forrest's turn to move, and he did so with his usual success. He prepared a new expedition into West Tennessee, consisting of two columns, one moving by way of Pocahontas and the other entering near Corinth. March 23, he sent a detachment under Colonel Duckworth against Union City, Tenn., which was guarded by about four hundred and seventy-five troops under Colonel Hawkins. Approaching the place early the twenty-fourth, the Confederates were received by Hawkins, who made a vigorous defense for some hours, but Duckworth pretended the presence of Forrest in overwhelming force, and reinforcements not arriving, Hawkins surrendered. Some hours before the enemy appeared, scouts reported their near presence, when Hawkins roused Edgar B. McNairn, a young operator from Canada, to telegraph General Brayman, commanding the Columbus, Ky., district, for aid. General Brayman ordered operator Pearson to proceed with him from Columbus to Union City. Three regiments of infantry and one battery loaded on flat cars, were started by rail to succor Hawkins. Before this, the line was cut (three A. M.) near Union City; proof of the presence of the foe, consequently the train moved very slowly, fearing ambush. Too tardy as we have seen. About six miles from Union City an old negro reported the fall of the place, and Brayman hurriedly returned. McNairn, who had taken position behind the defenses with the soldiers, was of course among Duckworth's prisoners. We will follow the military operations to the conclusion of this raid, and then see what befell McNairn. Forrest's main force moved directly

for Paducah, where (twenty-fifth) Colonel Hick's troops, aided by gun-boats, repelled several assaults upon Fort Anderson. The Confederate loss was about three hundred killed and wounded, and the Federal, sixty. Ed Peel was operator at this place at this time. From Paducah, Forrest moved southward, leaving Buford at Trenton, instructed to overrun the territory with his division, conscripting and foraging. Hendricks, the telegraph repairer at Blandville, was among the conscripts. The telegraph north of Columbus was cut and unused for over two weeks. April 10, the rebels in small force dashed on the pickets at the latter place, killing one and capturing another. On the thirteenth, Brayman was summoned by Buford to surrender, but instead, he opened his big guns of Columbus on the enemy, who decamped. On the fourteenth, Buford appeared again at Paducah, but retired about the expiration of the time allowed for the removal of the women and children. Meanwhile a small body from Memphis was whipped by a brigade at Bolivar, *en route* to join Forrest. Grierson in Memphis having organized a large force, still other cavalry was sent to Forrest. His command doubtless now exceeded five thousand men.

While Buford was approaching Paducah, Forrest was making a reputation at Fort Pillow, which place he captured on the 12th of April. Out of a garrison of five hundred and seventy-five, about forty-five per cent. were *killed.* The excuse for the remarkable disparity between the loss of the assailants not under cover, viz.: fourteen killed and eighty-six wounded, and the defenders behind works, few of whom were wounded and about two hundred and fifty killed, is that the *negroes* and *renegade* Tennessean defenders fought *heroically.* It is extremely difficult to fitly appreciate such heroism if we consider the paucity of results. It savors too much of *heroically* selling one's life as *cheaply* as possible. Suicides and self conceited martyrs are sometimes found to have preferred being dead cowards to living heroes, but instances where so *many* of either class, valiantly elect to fall by an enemy's hand are unknown, unless Forrest's apologists are to be believed. Soon after he moved into Mississippi.

R. B. Griffin and C. W. Pearson were operating at Columbus during these operations, and Jacob Volney Hill, the mana-

ger, was dying in the small-pox hospital. He entered the corps early in the war and rendered invaluable service, incurring great risk and suffering severe exposures. His energy, daring and ability attracted the personal attention of Colonel Stager, who complimented him for his achievements, and ordered Captain Fuller to increase his pay. Hill's was a hard fate.

A force of about twelve thousand left Memphis April 30, to operate under General Sturgis against Forrest's troopers, before they could return to Mississippi. They quickly left Bolivar on Sturgis' arrival, and effected their escape. Operator Fred W. Snell accompanied the Federals until, owing to his being retarded while mending the wire, the troops left him and his little party of repairers behind, liable at any moment to be captured or shot by the prowling banditti that infested the line of the Memphis & Charleston Road in that district. Consequently one of the men stood watch while the others worked. To all requests for a guard and orderlies, the General deigned no reply. He even took up his pontoons over Wolf River, thus compelling the operator and builders to construct a raft on which to cross the building material. As the party was sent out by General Washburne's order, to keep Sturgis in communication, the latter's utter disregard of the operator and constructionists seems strange. A raft of logs was made two miles from the railroad, the material carried to it from the hand car, was at the end of a hard day's work, landed on the other side the evening of May 3, when the line was extended to Moscow. Sturgis sent back important despatches for Washburne, but just as Snell began sending them the wire was severed, he knew not where, but believing it was at Colliersville, he secured five negro soldiers, and with Joe Wooten, a brave repairer, started for that town, seven miles from Wolf River. They cautiously approached the place, found the wire on the ground, connected the instrument and sent the despatches. They remained there, lying flat on the ground, while telegrams were being sent and received, over two hours. Happily it was quite dark, for a squad of the enemy's cavalry scarce twenty rods away were discussing the quality of a jug of Memphis whisky. When Washburne's last message was received the party returned by the hand car that brought them, as rapidly as possible. As the horrors of Fort Pillow were fresh

in their minds, the venture was the more commendable. Among the despatches to Sturgis was one ordering a guard for the telegraph party, which was sent.

E. B. McNairn, captive operator at Union City, began his great southward tramp at midday, reaching Trenton at two P.M. the following day. *En route* to Jackson some of the prisoners began to lag; McNairn among them. Colonel Wilson, commanding the guard, made a pass at him with a sword, which, owing to the rashness of McNairn, who thereupon seized a gun, came near resulting in the death of both; for had McNairn fired, Wilson's men would have made short work with the operator At Jackson, it was arranged by some of the prisoners to club the guard and escape; but as the Federals were encircled by a fire, the plan was abandoned. From here to Pocahontas, under Colonel Wilson, and thence to Ripley and Kelly's Mills, under the considerate Lieutenant Colonel White, these prisoners were marched leisurely or hurriedly by long or moderate marches, according as the air was infused with rumors of approaching Federals. From Kelly's Mills to Aberdeen, quite a number of prisoners escaped. After a tramp of about two hundred and fifty miles, West Point, Miss., was reached, from whence by rail the prisoners proceeded to Mobile, Ala., two hundred and thirty-two miles. Here they boarded a steamer, and ascending the Alabama River twenty miles, were debarked to march to Montgomery, and thence to Camp Sumter, in Anderson, Ga., where they were appalled, on arrival at daylight, by the sight of the great prison pen. Into this cruel prison — this bastile where were immured at one time full thirty thousand Federals, from which, during its occupancy, twelve thousand nine hundred and twenty Union dead were taken—McNairn and most of his comrades, who had survived their long marches, were lodged. But McNairn's stay here was short, and in the county jail, at Macon, sixty miles north, he soon met certain officers of his party, who had not been sent to Anderson. Altogether, there were one hundred and twenty-three officers confined in the jail on McNairn's reception.

Thoughts of escape were soon dominant. Colonel Hawkins succeeded in making an instrument from wire, by which he could unlock the door, but he seems not to have profited by it. Cap-

tain Moore had saved a pocket map of the United States, which was frequently consulted in debating a proper route of escape, on which point there were many opinions. McNairn secreted a case knife which was converted into a saw, and therewith the plank floor, after six days patient toiling, was cut. Six persons, confined in one apartment, were engaged in the effort to escape, which, as planned, involved the digging of a tunnel under the three foot thick wall of the prison, and twenty feet beyond. The parties engaged in this work were Captains Murray and Galloway, Lieutenants Ayers, Oats, Allander, and operator McNairn. Each man in his turn labored in digging down below the foundation. After succeeding in this, divesting themselves, one at a time, of most of their clothing, they in turn entered the hole and tunneled with the case-knife saw as long as the impure air would allow, and, having clasped his arms around the loose earth, a comrade would drag him out. The dirt was then thrown under the floor. By the 14th of May, every thing was in readiness for the great venture. It was arranged that one party, consisting of Galloway, Oats and Allander, should pass first. These were to go north and enter Sherman's lines about Dalton, Ga. The other three, starting a little later, *i. e.*, two, A. M., were to try and make General Asboth's quarters at Pensacola, Fla. Oats and McNairn finished the tunnel up to the surface, making a small opening through which stars could be seen. Oats led the way, but as he reached the opening, was alarmed by a sentinel within the yard (the tunnel opened into the public square), not over three feet from him. The sentinel was poking the earth and stones with his bayonet, doubtless believing the noise he had heard was made by rats. This caused the lieutenant to return and report that they were discovered, and that all was lost. For an hour all listened intently. The suspense grew each each moment and became oppressive. The first party refused to proceed, but the second determined to take their chances.

Ayers led the way out. McNairn followed in a few moments, and then came Murray. The night was clear and beautiful. The lights were burning in the streets. Across the open square was a guard house, from which came snatches of song and bursts of drunken laughter. A solitary man was seen walking a deserted street. The trio, having rubbed their boots well with onions to

prevent being tracked by the hounds, took the Southwestern Georgia Railroad, and walked about four miles to a copse, where they lay all day — the trains passing them on the right, and negroes working in the fields near by to the left. Even the noise of hounds was heard, and when night came they were wearied with excitement. At dark, providing themselves with stout cudgels, they started on their long, perilous and adventurous march for Pensacola, flanking each station when possible and avoiding as much as practicable their greatest enemy, mankind. Night after night they walked, oftentimes losing their way when off the railroad, sometimes nearly drowned in swamps and quicksands ; again, nearly famished, or crazed with thirst, they, nevertheless, under the impetus of hope and the excitement of their undertaking trudged on, sleeping by day on the bare ground, and finding too frequently that they had located their resting place unfortunately near some farm house or village, in which event anxiety prevented sleep. On a Sunday morning they were awakened by singing in a contiguous meeting-house. The rations which these men had stinted themselves to save for this trip while in jail, gave out before reaching Fort Valley, which place they tried to leave on the left, but took a road which led them right into the town. The next day Murray was in great agony from thirst, which was finally slaked from a mud puddle where McNairn and Murray drank themselves sick. Following the Columbus road, they crossed the Flint River and turned south-westerly toward Eufaula, sometimes barely living on the fish they caught, or the fowls they foraged ; again, surfeiting themselves at the table of some generous hostess or in a negro's cabin, or while lying in the swamps where Unionists sent them food. They were enabled eventually, after passing through Lumpkin at midnight, to reach and cross the Chattahoochee River at Florence, near Eufaula. At one farm house, where were three women and one man, the venturers, in the *rôle* of furloughed Confederates, were enjoying hospitalities. During the conversation which ensued, the three claimed to have met the son of the old gentleman in the army of Virginia. This son had been captured at Gettysburg, and well treated while a prisoner near New York. On his return he wore a blouse quite similar to McNairn's. This fact caused the son's mother, while the

party were at table, to lay her hand on McNairn's arm and, looking him squarely in the face, say "I believe you are a Yankee." His blushes and hesitation carried conviction, and it was well, because out of gratitude for her son's treatment, the three were well provided for continuing their journey. Passing Clayton, they struck the Pea River, intending by boat or raft to follow it to the gulf, but dams and waterfalls prevented. While lying in a swamp by the river, they separated and hid from a party approaching, whereby Murray became lost until near nightfall. Crossing the river, they continued their journey to Slip-up, where, as furloughed rebels, they dined with a Captain Harne and another Confederate officer. Pressing on over Winslow's bridge, past Geneva, they reached Hewitt's Bluff, Fla., where, while resting at midday in fancied security at a Union man's house, they luckily discovered the approach of troopers, who rode up to the house just as the Federals, leaving all behind, rushed out at the rear and ran rapidly toward a canebrake, called "tight eye," which was gained only after the pursuers on horseback had wildly fired several shots at the fugitives. The horses could not enter the swamp, and their riders drew off to get their dogs. At night a guide took them to an island, where were a great many Unionists avoiding conscription. On this island the three obtained a boat in which, after several nights hard work, they emerged at the mouth of the Choctawhatchee, where the owner of a fishing smack received them and carried them to the gunboat Bloomer, Captain Christie, near East Pass. The next day a tender conveyed them through the Santa Rosa Sound to the frigate "Potomac," lying off Pensacola, where they were landed and taken to General Asboth's head-quarters. Murray was too sick to start North immediately; Ayers went *via* the Atlantic coast and McNairn reached Memphis *via* the Mississippi, on the 2d of July, one hundred and one days from his capture, after traveling near three thousand miles, two thousand through the heart of the Confederacy, about seven hundred of which was on foot, and when he reached Memphis he was reduced from one hundred and fifty pounds to ninety-nine and one-half.

It may here be noted that in May, 1862, Pensacola was evacuated by the Confederates, and the telegraph wire connecting

that city with Northern ones was reeled up as far inland as Camp Lomax, thirty miles from Pensacola. At this point of observation, J. G. Thornton, operator and officer, communicated with the interior. Major T. J. Myers commanded the battalion of three companies of the Fifteenth Confederate cavalry, known in all the region thereabouts, which they scouted, as the "bloody Fifteenth," and it is not improbable that McNairn's visitants at Hewitt's Bluffs, were of this command. Federals from Pensacola frequently pursued the "bloody Fifteenth," and at one time drove them back to Pollard, where General Tyler, accompanied by Confederate States operator Frank U. McMullin, from Montgomery, with one thousand, five hundred reinforcements, checked the advance. In the retreat on Pollard, Thornton narrowly escaped capture or worse, in the conflicts which ensued, and during which, as an officer on Confederate General Clanton's staff, he was much exposed. C. H. Edwards was then operating at Pollard. The line was abandoned after this raid.

General Sturgis having signally failed to punish Forrest, was nevertheless allowed upon his return to Memphis, to organize another powerful expedition, which left that city early in June. Operator Snell accompanied Sturgis, but before starting, General Washburne gave an order directing the commanding general or any other officer to afford required assistance when solicited by the operator. The telegraph was repaired twenty-seven miles out, where the troops debarked from cars and began their south-easterly march to strike the Confederate cavalry and prevent its operating against Sherman's communications. Near Salem, Snell and three hundred cavalrymen were ordered to operate along the Mobile & Ohio Road. Passing through Ripley, they crossed the Hatchie River, captured some scouts and moved rapidly toward the railroad at Danville and Rienzi, where the depots were burned, as were also several trestles and one other bridge. On the fifth, Snell and fifty cavalrymen took another tack, which was enlivened by a running fight of nine miles, driving the enemy across the Tishimingo Creek with a small loss. Joining the larger party two days later, they narrowly escaped capture by the timely arrival of a reinforcement of five hundred. Snell was unable to effect anything on the Confederate wires.

Forrest warmly received Sturgis at Guntown, where ample

preparations for whipping the Federals had been made. On the tenth, the Union cavalry encountered the enemy's pickets, which were driven back, and the Confederates discovered in position. After four hours' fighting, the Federal cavalry was driven back, and the infantry began. All the forces Sturgis had in hand were soon engaged in a desperate struggle. Cavalry, army wagons and infantry became inextricably mixed, and about five P. M., the Unionists began giving ground. The negroes remembering Fort Pillow, fought with desperation, even clubbing their guns. That night, Sturgis' command fell back to Ripley, about twenty-five miles, a defeated and demoralized mass—nine thousand in all. The Confederates pressed their advantage nearly to Colliersville, by which time the Union loss was three thousand, five hundred men, many guns and wagons.

The monotony of being whipped or out generaled every time, grew burdensome to the Nationals in this section, and in part to retrieve success, yet another expedition was organized, but its great purpose was co-operative. General E. R. S. Canby at New Orleans, directing operations south of Cairo, was aiming at Mobile. Washburne's forces (including A. J. Smith's), Steele's in Arkansas, and the lower river troops, including Slocum's at Vicksburg, were to co-operate. The plan in this regard, which I deduce from messages in my possession, written by Canby himself at New Orleans, and put in cipher, was for "A. J. Smith's troops and any other that Washburne could reach, to pursue, and if possible destroy Forrest's command," and to that end wrote Canby, June 27, "I have placed under his (Washburne's) control, all the militia from the North-western States that were ordered to report to me, and several regiments of old troops from Missouri. This will enable him to give Smith an effective force of twelve or fifteen thousand men, and leave a reserve of five thousand for other operations. I will start the expedition against Mobile four days later. A cavalry expedition will start at the same time for (from) Vicksburg, for the purpose of distracting the attention of the enemy from Smith's operations and those in this neighborhood. A large cavalry force will leave the river above Baton Rouge, for the purpose of cutting the Mobile & Ohio Railroad." Steele at Little Rock, was directed "to make a demonstration in the direction of Price's forces," to "pre-

vent their coming down upon the river while these operations are pending." Slocum was ordered "to send all your (his) cavalry force that can be spared, for the purpose of making a demonstration in the direction of Jackson or beyond, for the purpose of distracting the attention of the enemy as much as possible from the other operations."

Smith was to start on the 2d of July and Canby the sixth. Steele was too weak to press on, and called for help to save his communications, and Canby sent a brigade and two batteries from Morganzia to the mouth of the White River, to be commanded by General Gordon. Price moved and entered Missouri in September. Five days before Canby was to begin the great movement, on which he had set his heart, he received an order for a great part of his troops to be sent to the Army of the Potomac, to which without a murmur he promptly responded as follows:

HEAD-QUARTERS MILITARY DIVISION OF THE WEST, Mississippi.
NEW ORLEANS, July 1, 1864.

MAJOR GENERAL HALLECK, Chief of Staff of the Army, Washington:

Your despatch of the twenty-fourth has just been received. I will send twenty thousand men. All sea-going steamers now here will be taken up, and the movement commenced at once.

(Signed) E. R. S. CANBY, *Maj. Gen.*

And the next day six thousand were on board. Even Texas, except twelve hundred at Brazos Santiago, was ordered to be abandoned.

But Canby determined to demonstrate all along the river line and Smith started early in July. With him was Stephen L. Robinson, operator and cipherer. Skirmishing was incessant, and the heat intense. It is said that from three to four hundred of Smith's soldiers were sunstruck during the first two days of the advance from Salisbury. Tupelo was reached, the enemy falling back, but to advance again for a speedy conflict in order that the calls for aid now coming from Mobile, which place Canby had thoroughly aroused, might be met. Generals S. D. Lee and Forrest were badly beaten on the fourteenth, but Smith's forces were out of ammunition, and what was worse, of food also. Indeed the soldiers were nearly famished while returning.

On nearing Ripley, Smith determined to send Grierson on to Memphis with the cavalry and rest the infantry on the line of the Memphis Railroad, and accordingly Grierson soon advanced some miles beyond.

The forces were thus divided, when Smith concluded to let Robinson go on also, and writing despatches for Washburne, which were handed one of the two orderlies who accompanied the operator; the three rode ahead to overtake Grierson. To shorten the gap, they took a by way, which was skirted by woods. While riding single file over this road, the coarse voice of a man entirely hidden in the brush, called "halt!" As if by preconcert, the three riders spurred their horses at once. The two soldiers being ahead, escaped unhurt, but Robinson was behind and being dressed as an officer, except shoulder straps, he was at once singled out as *the* one of the three, and not stopping, one guerrilla, who had a musket, shot Robinson's horse in the right shoulder, while the other with a two barreled gun, loaded heavily with buck-shot and slugs, shot Robinson; one bullet lodging in the joint of the right knee; two others penetrated almost through the leg near the thigh, stopping just under the skin; two entered the hip, where they are to this day; one cut through the shoulder and another passed through the arm above the elbow and striking a rib, ran around to the spine, where it was afterwards found. Robinson's blouse and pants were literally riddled. His horse fell against a sapling as soon as struck, throwing the operator to the ground, and immediately after hobbled off, following the orderlies, who rode in haste to overtake Grierson. Of course Robinson was entirely at the mercy of the two bushwhackers, and especially was he impressed with this fact on reaching for his revolver in his right boot leg, for he then discovered that his arm was paralyzed. As his telegraph instrument was in his saddle-bags, it was saved, but his cipher key, number twelve, and all his valuables, except a chainless watch in his pants fob, were taken from him, as was also his coat and vest. The captors then ordered him to get up and follow them, but Robinson replied after feigning an attempt to comply, "You see I cannot walk." "Well," one said, "we will soon come after you," and off they started, but no sooner were they out of sight than Robinson tried to run away. He made

some progress, tumbling every few rods, like a drunken man, and finally reached a small creek, which he tried to cross. He walked out on a log and fell off into the water. It seemed as if even the elements were against him, but in truth the ducking was a blessing in disguise, and a few minutes later, the orderlies and some of Grierson's men were riding up at a rapid pace. All of the remaining shot or slugs were cut out, except those in the thigh, and Robinson was one of the few of the wounded of that expedition, who recovered. Gangrene was more fatal than lead. If it be asked why operators were sent on these expeditions, we reply, first, they were the only cipherers in the army, and it was customary to send back reports and receive orders in cipher; and second, it was the operator's duty to attach his instrument to the Confederate lines and thus obtain evidence of the enemy's movements whenever possible. Snell and Robinson seem not to have been very successful in tapping the enemy's wires, while accompanying the several raids just related, but they were *liable* to be of greatest usefulness.

Yet another movement from Memphis was undertaken; this time as before, under A. J. Smith's immediate command. His forces (twelve thousand, largely infantry), advanced in August, south of Grand Junction on Oxford, along the railroad. Chalmers, and later Forrest also, opposed this movement, but feebly and finding Smith too strong, Forrest determined on a dash at Memphis itself. The telegraph was erected as far south *via* Grand Junction as Smith's main force went, but Forrest doubtless had foresight enough to cut the line before flanking the Federals. At any rate, starting from a point south of Oxford at five P. M., August 18, with over two thousand men and riding as rapidly as possible, he astonished the natives at four A. M., of Sunday, the twenty-first, by appearing in force in the streets of Memphis. Generals Hurlbut, Washburne and Buckland were supposed to be sleeping at the Gayoso House, and thither the advance of Forrest's forces rode as hurriedly as possible, intent on capturing these and other officers. The "others" were there, but the Generals having enjoyed their evening out, had unsuspectingly lodged elsewhere. July 13, Superintendent Fuller placed R. S. Fowler in charge of the Memphis district, which included all territory in telegraphic communication with that city.

and specially enjoined on him to have "a good operator on hand *at all times* at Washburne's office," and it so happened that C. W. Pearson was operator at general head-quarters, on the night and morning of Forrest's approach. R. S. Fowler, J. R. Dixon, C. H Spellman and J. O. Byrnes, also head-quarters operators, escaped. Perhaps they were out late that night also. Pearson getting somewhat drowsy, was startled by firing on Union Street, and looking out, saw quite a force of cavalry, which he mistook for Union troops, and was about returning to his seat, when the Judge Advocate ran through the hall and up stairs, reporting the presence of rebels. Pearson thinking the building would be fired, hastened to the back stoop and jumped off, never thinking that it was eighteen feet high. No sooner had he landed, than he was called to a halt by a Confederate, but avoiding him, he ran through the lower hall and right into a nest of the enemy, who took him under their protecting care and hurried off with him out of the city. There were five thousand soldiers in Memphis, and Forrest was no match for them, so after about an hour's stay he hurried off with three hundred prisoners, losing about two hundred of his own men by the dash. About five miles out, the General lay in a fence corner on a poncho, when Pearson approached to ask to be paroled. The General plied him with questions about Smith's plans, forces, etc., and receiving evasive replies, Forrest became vexed and made Pearson take his place with the other prisoners and march to Tupelo, seventy-five miles, in a two days' rain, where, after a sound sleep in the mud, he boarded the freight cars. By this time his clothes, except an undershirt and pair of pants, had been appropriated by his "guides," and now one of them enforced an exchange of his pantaloons for a pair big enough for Barnum's giant. One of the fellow prisoners spoke out, "let him keep his pants, that is all he has left of the blue," but the rebel replied, "can't do it, his belly is blue, that will answer" Pearson's excursion included Grenada, Canton, Jackson, DuVall's Bluff, Ala., Selma and then to that great resort, Cahaba, where soon after came Pettit and Ludwig. Thinking his chances of exchange as operator very poor, Pearson reported himself at Cahaba as a member of Company M, Second Illinois cavalry, and as such was finally exchanged.

Connected with the prison was a yard where the cooking was done. The prisoners could pass out to this yard, but were forbidden to stop within a circle which they were obliged to go through and which was marked off by sticks. This circle was the *dead line*. Pearson was, one morning, passing through it, when some one behind called to him, whereat he thoughtlessly stopped and looked behind; but no sooner had he done so than another cried out, "For God's sake, Pearson, get out of that!" He jumped as if to escape a bullet. It is sad to relate that the guard did indeed fire, and that the ball struck a prisoner—a mere lad, who was passing near by at the time. Pearson got leave to watch over the wounded boy and keep off the flies; but it was a short duty, for in twenty minutes the young soldier, after saying "Boys, if you ever capture a rebel soldier, remember me," died on the rude stretcher he was being carried on to the hospital.

Another time the operator, for some real or imagined disobedience, was made to mark time on the burning sand, the sun beating hot upon him, so that his feet were covered with blisters. Pearson, lighter by thirty pounds was not recognized at Washburne's head-quarters when he came "marching home again," with the seventy-six exchanged head-quarters' troops.

General A. J. Smith's forces were supplied at Abbeville by rail. W. D. Hawkins operated in the depot in Memphis; Snell and McNairn at LaGrange; G. E. Spellman at Colliersville; James K. Gulliher at Moscow, and Edward F. Butler at Holly Springs.

Chalmers now commanded the Confederates, and being steadily pushed southward, and fearing defeat north of the Yocona, crossed most of his forces, but left his adjutant general, Captain L. T. Lindsey and a small scouting command, to watch the Federals, who were nearing Oxford. Lindsey, being an operator, kept Chalmers constantly advised of affairs in front. But Smith was now needed to save Missouri from Price's advancing army, and all of this section was again vacated, and September 1, the line from LaGrange to Germantown was abandoned, and, later, to White's Station. Washburne, taught a lesson by Forrest's dash, determined to have telegraph "offices on the main roads leading into Memphis, just outside the city."

During Smith's advance on Oxford, the guerrillas in the

north-west corner of Tennessee were very annoying. Captain Samuel Bruch, having relieved Fuller of the Cairo District, wrote General Paine, at Paducah, who then (August) commanded the District of West Kentucky (with whom, by the General's special request, was John A. Cassell, telegrapher), giving the names of fourteen "guerrillas who infest the country between Blandville and Columbus, and who are in the habit of cutting the telegraph." * * "I have no doubt," he said, "but a little wholesome shooting will be very beneficial to the telegraph as well as the service generally." Among the fourteen were "John Price; lives ten miles from Columbus; swears will kill Dicus, telegraph repairer, if ever catches him." "George Griffie, now prisoner at Paducah. He captured Government horse from telegraph repairer at Blandville, and told Hendricks, the repairer, would shoot him if ever caught him putting up line again." Bruch also gave the names of five guerrillas who "came to Dicus' house a few days since, five miles from Columbus, hunting for him." Paine's severe orders, which followed, produced the desired effect.

Vicksburg is now to be paid a hurried visit. We last noticed this place in the fall of 1863. John C. Sullivan was District manager then. His operative force was soon reduced to E. D. Butler, John R. Frank, S. L. Robinson, K. B. Howe and James K. Gulliher. The office in the city in the "Wirt Adams Bank" building was pleasant and roomy until a quarter-master seized it by authority, sending the telegraphers as angry as hornets into the top story. Outpost offices were established, and monotony like constantly falling drops of water made its deep impress on the operators. Sullivan was unfortunately relieved in September, 1863, by Robert S Fowler, of Chicago, Ill., who had never seen any military service. In consequence, "Yankee," the peer of the best, resigned and left the department, as he ought to have done. Fowler was much liked after the first feelings of jealousy wore off, and was the next year transferred to the management of the Memphis District, where he was relieved in September by E. F. Butler. Samuel D. Cochrane succeeded Fowler at Vicksburg, and George Gallup was sent to take Cochrane's place. Gallup hung around for two weeks, prospecting, and then took a boat for New Orleans, and Cochrane, against his

wish, retained the management. E. D. Butler was made superintendent of the Big Black River Railroad. Various, but except as already related, mainly unimportant, were the expeditions out from Vicksburg in 1864, one of which under General Dana brought in two telegraph instruments, taken at Woodville, Miss. This expeditionary force was one of three which started late in the year, to prevent Confederates from being sent East to operate against Thomas or Sherman. Dana's troops met the enemy in force on the Big Black, and defeating them, began destroying railroad property. General Davidson led another from Baton Rouge to Tangipahoa, Franklintown and West Pascagoula, creating great alarm in Mobile; but it was Grierson's raid from Memphis, with three thousand and five hundred cavalry, that wrought most damage.

Grierson started December 21, taking with him Stephen L. Robinson, operator, now fully recovered from his wounds. He struck the Mobile & Ohio road at Tupelo, intending to so destroy it as to render it utterly useless to Hood's army, which was then flying from the scene of its overthrow (Nashville) by Thomas' army. The enemy were in Corinth, and the idea was to break the road as far north as possible. Grierson sent Robinson with about two hundred troopers from Ripley, to strike as near Corinth as they could reach, and, moving south along the road, destroy it as badly as possible, while overtaking the main body. Riding hard, Robinson's party, under a major, dashed into Rienzi, twelve miles south of Corinth, at four, A. M., capturing a picket post. Robinson connected his instrument with the line, but the hour was too early, hence no information of consequence obtained. The torch was then applied to bridges, etc., when the party moved toward Tupelo, but was soon overtaken by Confederates who harassed them greatly.

While feeding their horses on a roadway which ran through a swamp, the troops were not a little excited over a remarkably perfect mirage, by which Grierson's whole camp, fifteen miles away, was distinctly seen *in the sky*. Every move in that distant camp was clearly defined by this strange *fata Morgana*.

Two days and nights Robinson was in the saddle before overtaking Grierson. At Okolona, important telegrams announcing the coming of reinforcements, were intercepted. The Federals

promptly attacked the enemy at Egypt, near by, and while whipping the force in front, other troops turned against and repulsed another which had just arrived.

Robinson frequently connected his instrument with the main line as Grierson moved on toward Meridian. One night, taking two orderlies, he went beyond the troops, and attached his pocket instrument to the wire, and listened for two hours to the passing telegrams. In this way the operator was of very great service, as he gained much valuable information.

During this trip, Grierson, Captain Woodard, Robinson, and perhaps six others, chanced to precede the command several miles, to find themselves suddenly confronted by a company of rebel scouts who would surely have captured the little party, had not the General audaciously commanded a charge. The Confederates, like sensible men, supposed the Federals had more coming, and hurried off, as they ought, leaving Grierson and his party to lionize themselves.

Striking across the country south-westerly, the Mississippi Central Road was badly damaged, and finally after several minor conflicts, the force reached Vicksburg with five hundred prisoners, eight hundred beeves and one thousand negroes.

An immense drove of hogs was captured *en route*, which the soldiers tried to drive into Vicksburg, but the swine were obstinate; they preferred all ways but the right one and once in a while it seemed as if the devils had again entered these "unclean" beasts; now they are in the very midst of the force, tumbling horse and the rider, who usually rose with blasphemy escaping from his lips, while the laughter of the more fortunate drowned the wickedness, so that no record was ever made against the *fallen* ones. Anon, the quadrupeds were in the bush where horses could not go, and then his hogship began rooting with provoking *nonchalance*. It was ultimately decided to corral the animals in a lot and shoot and burn them. Accordingly they were killed, the fire applied, and that great mass cremated.

In the Gulf Department where General E. R. S. Canby was located, and concerning which, we have in this chapter had glimpses, but little (unrelated heretofore) of special moment occurred until the summer of 1864. Canby was energetic, but

crippled as we have seen, when about to advance. However, he expressed himself to General Washburne as determined to make the most of the forces left him, and as a consequence, extended his actual jurisdiction in all directions, thereby requiring of Superintendent Bulkley the building of many miles of telegraph.

About the 1st of August, 1864, Captain Bulkley at his own suggestion, was relieved and furloughed indefinitely without pay or emolument, to enable him to enter upon the *quasi* public work of building the American portion of an international line called "The Collins Overland Telegraph," which, east of the Amoor River, was to be constructed under the auspices of the Western Union Telegraph Company, and from the mouth of that river to St. Petersburg, Russia, seven thousand miles, by the Russian Government. It was estimated that this would give an European telegraphic connection sixteen thousand miles long. At this time no cable had been successfully laid across the Atlantic Ocean. Bulkley took with him from the Gulf Department his chief assistant, Frank N. Wicker, Scott R. Chappell, head-quarters cipherer, Ed Conway and J. W. Pitfield.

At the time of Captain Fuller's formal assignment (August 1) to this Department, Bulkley had constructed six hundred and ninety-five miles of telegraph, as follows:

	MILES.
From New Orleans to the mouth of the Red River,	205
New Orleans to Pass Manchac,	39
New Orleans to Lake Port,	7
New Orleans to Fort Pike,	32
New Orleans to South-west Pass,	113
New Orleans to Brashear City,	80
New Orleans to New Iberia,	133
Fort St. Philip to Fort Jackson,	1
Head of Passes to Pass a l'Outré,	20
La Fourche to Fort Butler,	40
Baton Rouge to Port Hudson,	25

The lines from Brashear City to New Iberia, forty-one miles, and Morganzia to Red River Landing, twenty-five miles, were temporarily abandoned.

The offices in this Department for the month of June, for example, were operated as follows: New Orleans, by H. W.

Nichols, Henry Stouder, S. B. Fairchild, Scott R. Chappell, Daniel Elphick, G. W. Baxter, B. H. Upham, John Hefferin, I. A. Sherman and Wm. Anderson; Port Hudson, by E. H. Johnson and Milton H. Bassette; Morganzia, by A. W. O'Neal and Wm. A. Tinker; Baton Rouge, by Charles W. Moore; Thibedeaux, by Alvin A. Howard; Brashear City, by S. S. Ulmer; Algiers, by F. H. Bassette; Fort Pike, by Charles I. Fancher and F. A. Sanborn; Boutte, La., by Henry Bowerman; Camp Parapet, by Patrick Moloney; South-west Pass, by W. H. Munro; Quarantine, by Edward VonEye; Bonne Carre, by L. J. Hebard; Pass a l'Outré, by Robert C. Loomis; Fort Jackson, by D. W. Hunter; Cubitts, by Richard Cubitt, Jr.; Fort Macomb, by John H. Meehan; Head of Passes, by H. S. Valentine; Pass Manchac, by J. W. Hynes; Napoleonville, by Chas. O. Conner and Geo. S. Hanna; Lake Port, by C. Lindauer; Terre Bonne, by Edward E. Bates; Tigerville, by C. S. Johnson; Point Celeste, by J. Deslondes; at General Canby's headquarters, S. P. Kimber was chief.

Many of these offices were located near cypress swamps, where it was found impossible for operators to stay and live any considerable length of time. D. W. Hunter, operator from West Chester, Pa., became a victim of malaria and died at Fort Jackson, October 12, 1864, leaving a wife and three children in Mifflin County, Pa.

Recurring once more to military affairs, it seems proper by way of epitomizing the situation in the midsummer of 1864, to exhibit a report from Canby, telegraphed from Cairo, as follows:

HEAD-QUARTERS MILITARY DIVISION OF WEST MISSISSIPPI.
NEW ORLEANS, LA., August 4, 1864.

MAJOR GENERAL H.W. HALLECK, Chief of Staff, Washington, D. C.:

On the nineteenth ultimo, General E. K. Smith and Major General Magruder reached Alexandria from Texas, and on the twentieth, General Smith left for Shreveport. On the same day the divisions of Magins, Walker Wharton and Polignac commenced moving in the direction of the Atchafalaya. The advance reached Semmesport on the twenty-first, and from three to five hundred mounted men were thrown across that river. The forces at Morganzia were reinforced by four thousand troops from this city, and twenty-three

hundred from Vicksburg, and on the twenty-eighth, a force under General Ullmann encountered and, after some sharp skirmishing, dispersed the rebel force that had crossed. The casualties on either side were not large, but Colonel Chrysler, Second New York cavalry, a valuable officer, was severely wounded. Captain McNally, an active partisan on the rebel side, was killed. On the twenty-ninth (29th) the rebel force at Semmesport had disappeared, and the whole force appeared to be moving in the direction of Alexandria. On the first instant, Hardeman's brigade had crossed the Red River and was moving in the direction of Vidalia. Walker's division was moving in the same direction. A scout sent out from Natchez on the third of last month, has just returned and reports a general movement of the rebel troops on Red River to the eastward. The troops on the lower Teche are also moving in that direction. The scout reports that General Smith had been ordered to cross the Mississippi, and reinforce the troops opposed to Sherman. Mobile papers of a late date, state that this order has been given and that Smith's force was expected to cross soon. The recent movements indicate this intention, or to make an attempt upon General Steele's lines. General Gordon, who had been sent temporarily to White River, where General Steele's communications were threatened by Shelby, has now been instructed to remain, if the movements of the enemy should indicate the line of the Arkansas as the real point of attack. Price was still at Camden on the thirty-first; Fagan at Monticello; Marmaduke on the Arkansas River, near Red Fork, and Shelby east of White River. General Steele reports sharp skirmishing on the line of his communications, with, in the aggregate, about equal losses. None of these forces have been materially reduced, although small parties have been undoubtedly sent into Missouri for the purpose of collecting recruits. General Buford reports sharp fighting at Simm's Ferry, on Big Creek, with severe loss on both sides. His detailed report has not yet been received. The difficulties in Missouri can only be controlled by the inhabitants who should be constrained to array themselves for the government or be regarded and treated as enemies. I have ordered (2) two regiments of cavalry from Memphis to report to General Rosecrans. I do not think it expedient to send more, even if they could be spared, unless there should be an organized invasion of the States and we can prevent that, as long as we can hold the line of the Arkansas. Admiral Farragut will make an attack upon the

forts at the entrance of Mobile Bay in the course of this week, and I have sent Major General Granger with two thousand men to occupy and hold Dauphin Island in order to secure the Admiral's communication with the sea, if he should succeed in passing the forts. The troops from Texas are now arriving. I have notified the collector of the port of the temporary abandonment of Brownsville, but I presume that the same notification should be given by such authority in Washington, as will prevent clearances from foreign ports to Brownsville.

E. R. S. CANBY, *Major General.*

All eyes were now turned toward Mobile. With Granger, went operator B. H. Upham and later followed John R. Dixon, recently with Gen. Reynolds at the mouth of White River, and Dorsey Berry. Admiral Farragut having completed preparations, moved his fleet consisting of four gunboats and fourteen wooden ships of war, against Forts Morgan, Gaines and Powell August 5, 1864. The Confederate ram Tennessee and other war vessels were captured; Fort Powell abandoned; Fort Gaines surrendered on the seventh and Morgan the twenty-third; thus 104 guns and 1,464 prisoners were taken and Mobile effectually blockaded. The Federal monitor Tecumseh was blown up by a rebel torpedo and lost with nearly all her crew.

Gen. Canby, September 5, ordered a telegraph cable laid from Morgan to Gaines, which was accomplished on the eleventh. The distance is twenty-three thousand five hundred and thirty feet. Operators Israel A. Sherman and M. H. Bassette were sent to Morgan and George R. Penn and C. S. Johnson to Gaines and later, Orrin K. Newton to Bon-Secour Bay to the north-east of Morgan. These operators had but little to do for the most part, except dig oysters during the ebb tides. The Confederates had worked a line from Gaines to Powell and Powell to Cedar Point on the main land and thence to Mobile. Only about fifty yards of the water route was cabled, the rest being on poles sunk in the shallows. A large quantity of very good cable was captured at Fort Powell, which in later operations was made useful.

The end of the rebellion in the valleys of the mighty rivers running through the south western territory was evidently ap-

proaching, but a brave hope and a great pride were procrastinating it, honor at least, it was cruelly urged, required additional sacrifices.

When a people continue a fratricidal war on mistaken notions of the dictates of chivalry, it is to be regretted that the sacrifices are not confined to one side.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE TELEGRAPH IN ARKANSAS AND MISSOURI DURING THE LAST HALF OF 1864.—PRICE'S INVASION OF MISSOURI.—VARIOUS BATTLES, AND INCIDENTS.—MAJOR SMITH RESIGNS IN FAVOR OF CAPTAIN CLOWRY.—A SUMMARY OF THE SERVICE.

Notwithstanding the fact that there were sections of the seceding States where the Confederates more than held their own, on the whole, it was evident by the fall of 1864, if not prior thereto, that the rebellion was becoming exhausted. Perhaps a cessation of the struggle might reasonably have been first expected where it last occurred, *i. e.*, in the sparsely settled trans-Mississippi States where poverty was the rule. It is to this division, once more ablaze from the Gulf to St. Louis, that we now invite attention.

August 1, 1864, the only lines in Arkansas in operation, were from Little Rock to Lewisburg, fifty miles; Little Rock to Pine Bluff, forty-five miles; Little Rock to DuVall's Bluff, forty-seven miles; Fort Smith to Van Buren, four miles, and sometimes to Fayetteville. Although in the preceding fall every county but fourteen was represented at Little Rock in constitutional convention, whereby the State was reorganized, and hence recognized by Congress, yet by the defeat of Banks in the Red River country and his retirement, the great Confederate wave which began on the Texan coast now swept northward, retaking two-thirds of Arkansas, separating the Federal strongholds by destroying communication, conscripting and punishing Unionists who had avowed their sentiments, raiding over the State almost at will, and even threatening St. Louis, Mo., itself. The whole trans-Mississippi country was influenced decidedly by Banks' withdrawal. Confederate cavalryman Shelby harassed the Unionists in various sections of Arkansas, though at times he was himself overmatched by pursuing troopers. The rebels in consid-

erable force even ventured to the neighborhood of Helena, Ark., where they were defeated after a severe conflict, by five hundred and fifty Unionists. Late in August Shelby captured a Federal regiment between DuVall's Bluff and Little Rock. Price was now organizing the last great expedition that ever invaded Missouri. It was composed of his own, Fagan's and Shelby's forces, released by Banks' retirement, and was to be reinforced in Missouri by twenty-three thousand Knights of the Golden Circle and Sons of Liberty. General Rosecrans assumed command of the Missouri Department January 28, 1864, but his troops were reduced by calls elsewhere to but a few thousand home guards, some hundred-day men whose time had expired, and a few volunteers; perhaps twelve thousand all told, variously located. Price moved northward *via* Batesville and advanced on Pilot Knob *en route* for St. Louis. This was late in September, 1864.

Let us now take a glance at the telegraphic facilities then afforded Rosecrans, for he fought this coming campaign from his telegraphic offices in St. Louis and Jefferson City.

It is proper to premise that up to October 1, 1864, all telegraphic operations in Missouri and Kansas were under Major G. H. Smith's immediate direction, after that under the care of Captain Clowry, his successor. March 9 Rosecrans ordered the Sedalia line extended from Warrensburg to Kansas City, following the route of the Pacific Railroad. Under this order, the telegraph was erected *via* Pleasant Hill and Weston to Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, one hundred and eight miles, thus placing St. Louis on a direct circuit with Fort Leavenworth; and under an order of the 28th of March a line from Allen *via* Glasgow to Booneville where it connected with Syracuse and Tipton, was built. In June, by order of General Fisk commanding in North Missouri, St. Joseph was connected with Weston (forty-five miles), thus giving the former two telegraphic routes to St. Louis.

Late in April the department commander directed the rebuilding of a line *via* Pilot Knob, Cape Girardeau and Sikeston to New Madrid. This was completed in May, seventy-four miles being reconstructed. Another line was built connecting Cape Girardeau with Bloomfield (forty-five miles) and the Pilot

Knob wire extended southward (twenty-eight miles) to Patterson. Altogether there were in operation including the wire (one hundred and twenty miles long) from Fort Leavenworth to Fort Scott, Kansas, one thousand three hundred and twenty miles of military telegraph under Major Smith's direction, which included also General S. R. Curtis' Department of Kansas; that officer having assumed command with headquarters at Fort Leavenworth in January, 1864. Very soon after taking command Curtis wrote Smith as follows:

> I am obliged to you for the early efforts you have manifested to supply my command. I must have telegraphic communication with Fort Blunt (old Fort Gibson) and Fort Smith. The Arkansas River must be lined with posts, and department commanders must have connection with them everywhere. I hope that you will be prepared to add from two to three hundred miles of line to the Fort Scott line as I expect to get the privilege of so extending it. I have ordered out a full company in place of a small detail to push the work to Fort Scott, and your superintendent (Byington) is actively, and I think successfully, carrying on the work.

But the proposed extension was not approved by the Secretary of War.

July 13, 1864, Major Smith wrote Colonel Stager, "On the first of September next I shall have been two years in the service and propose at that time to resign my commission." He also recommended Captain Clowry, then in Arkansas, for the management of the Corps in Missouri, Kansas and Arkansas. Much as the Major's retirement from a field, where he had served so usefully, was regretted, the fact that Col. Stager coincided with his views as to his successor in case of his quitting, made it certain that the members would not abate any of their zeal for the service. Upon Major Smith's taking leave of those who had been pleased to serve under him so long and well, many were the heartfelt expressions he received.

GEORGE H. SMITH was born in Norwich, New York, June 23, 1833. Expecting to pursue a collegiate course, he prepared therefor in an academy located at home, but an untoward turn of fortune's wheel reduced his father's means. Instead of obtaining a collegiate education, George, at seventeen, entered a drug

store as clerk thereof, bringing with him, however, his Greek and Latin grammars, which he studied at intervals. In 1851, he began business in a modest way for himself, as proprietor of a paper and book store. Next year, the "Utica and Oxford Telegraph" line, one of the many little companies then springing up to die young, brought Norwich into the telegraphic world, and Mr. Smith was selected as the one best adapted to attend to the operating. Accordingly, he was sent to Utica to acquire the art, but after learning the alphabet and getting some idea of the manipulations, he was obliged to return to his own business, where, however, an instrument was placed in circuit. It was not long before he taught himself to operate, and to read by ear. Practice made him proficient. In 1857, he constructed and superintended a line from Terre Haute, Ind., to St. Louis, Mo. This line ran to the consolidated office in St. Louis, of which Mr. Smith became manager. The other wires were those of the "Western Union," the "Illinois and Mississippi," and "Missouri and Western" companies. Mr. Smith had had about four years service at the telegraphic head-quarters of Missouri, when the war began. He knew, perhaps better than any other telegrapher, who, in that service, were trustworthy, for some were bitterly opposed to the Union. He knew many of those men who plotted treason in the State, and, having had years of practical instruction in every branch of telegraphy, and being by reason and birth, of pronounced Northern sentiment, and in the prime of life, it was not unnatural that General Halleck, as shown in a

GEORGE H. SMITH.

preceding chapter, preferred his appointment to that of any other, however well qualified, loyal and energetic such other might be. Smith's position in the consolidated office brought him in contact with Union officers in Missouri, who had entrusted him with various telegraphic commissions. Foreseeing the necessity of organized effort to maintain telegraphic communication with the gathering armies in Missouri, Mr. Smith, who early won the confidence of General Fremont, submitted to that officer his plan for departmental telegraphic organization, which was substantially approved by Fremont, and partially carried out, as shown elsewhere, when orders came from Washington to disband for want of authority of law, and because another plan had been adopted, which placed all the war telegraphs of the Union, under one management. Smith's appointment as captain and assistant quarter-master followed properly and naturally from the position he held when it was found necessary to commission the superintendents. His territory, overrun as it was by guerrillas, was at least as difficult as any to work, but he devoted his energies with patriotic zeal to the labor, and as a result, the telegraph in the Department of Missouri proved vitally important to the Union. His victories were bloodless. They even saved lives of Union soldiers, and materially contributed to the restoration of the trans-Mississippi country.

October 1, Captain Clowry relieved Major Smith and appointed Charles A. Hammann assistant for Missouri, Theodore Holt for Arkansas, and re-appointing Dwight Byington for Kansas.

While telegraphic extensions were progressing, raids, bushwhacking and other minor skirmishing took place in various parts of the State, but as a rule it had become much quieted, except that in a *semi*-peaceful way many of its people were organizing a fresh outbreak, when Price should appear in force to encourage and support them. Indeed, aid was confidently expected from members of treasonable orders as far east as Ohio.

General Washburne at Memphis telegraphed Rosecrans, *via* New Madrid, that Price was moving toward Missouri. That was before the movement was fully developed, but none too soon, as A. J. Smith's veteran division, on which hung the fate of St. Louis, was on transports, ascending the river to join Sherman in Georgia. Telegrams at Cairo diverted Smith's course to St.

Louis. On came Price, with a force ranging from ten thousand to twenty thousand men, largely cavalry. Scouts reported at the various southerly telegraph stations the advance on Patterson. September 28, Price assaulted Pilot Knob, where John H. Byrne was telegraphing. General Thomas Ewing, commanding a force of twelve hundred men, repulsed the assaults, suffering a loss during the day of two hundred men, and inflicting on his adversaries near five times greater injury. But Ewing's only safety lay in retreat on Rolla, and accordingly he spiked his guns and moved therefor, reaching it in safety after an exhaustive march and being harassed by Shelby. At Mineral Point, sixty-one miles from St. Louis and twenty-five north of the Knob, a good part of General Smith's command was concentrated to meet a portion of Price's troops expected there. Smith called in his out-posts, planted his guns and awaited attack. A train laden with soldiers and refugees, including the Irondale operator, was delayed in consequence of injury done the road near the Point. The attack on the train which followed was repulsed, the track repaired, and the train saved. By this time the woods were filled with Confederates, and picket firing began. Miss Louisa Volker, operating at the Point, having been at her instrument continuously for two days and nights, was relieved by the Irondale operator.

At noon of the twenty-eighth, General Smith was telegraphed to fall back, and by three, P. M., the last train started. Every male citizen, fearing conscription, left also. Miss Volker and sister remained to protect their father's home from destruction. After hiding all evidences of her employment, and placing a pistol in her pocket, with a fixed purpose of defending herself and sister against violence, she overlooked the little village from her window, and discovered Confederate cavalrymen, ragged and dirty, with "lean and hungry" looks, suddenly possess the place and begin their ravenous search for food, not to mention their hunt for plunder. This rabble was composed of men, barefooted, but spurred; others clothed in gaudy-colored curtain damask; all manner of hats and caps; some in Federal uniform, and strapped to their saddles was all kinds of plunder—calico, domestic, shoes, boots, tin pans, bed quilts, etc. Volker's house was soon filled by men who stole blankets and clothing, and

helped themselves to the edibles at the same time. Miss Volker now discovered the depot, tank and engine-house in flames. Mineral Point and Coles bridges were also destroyed. By five o'clock, the enemy had all passed north, and the silence that prevailed in that deserted village was more trying than the presence of the dreaded enemy. The dead bodies of three negroes, killed by the cavalry, lay where they fell until the hogs had nearly devoured them. Night approached, and darkness and imagination multiplied terrors in Volker's house, at least. The two young ladies, armed with pistol and their father's shot-gun, stood in the center of a room, still as death, listening intently. Morning brought report that St. Louis was captured. Not long after, an unfounded rumor that Indians had deluged Potosi in blood, stampeded the women and children from the Point.

When Price moved north-westerly, R. C. Volker rebuilt this line and re-opened the Pilot Knob office. M. E. Washburn took the Patterson office. Price having advanced *via* Potosi to Franklin on the Pacific Railroad, thirty-seven miles from St. Louis, burned the depot, Government warehouses, machine shops and other property. It was unfortunate for the Government that C. S. Barrett, operator at this station, was East on leave of absence, but it was fortunate that the line from Allen (near Moberly), on the North Missouri Railroad to Sedalia, gave Rosecrans the benefit of constant and direct communication with his forces about Jefferson City, in Price's front. A. J. Smith followed in Price's wake, accompanied probably by J. Blish, Jr., or B. McMurtrie, operators. Generals Sanborn (Ewing L. Armstrong, operator) and McNeil came up from Rolla and joined Generals Fisk and Brown at the capital, ahead of Price, who being afraid to attack, moved toward Kansas *via* Booneville and Lexington, followed now by Generals Pleasanton, Sanborn, Brown, Fisk, Smith and Mower; the latter coming up from Arkansas. When the Booneville line was cut, the direct one to Jefferson City was repaired, and the indirect one *via* the North Missouri Railroad, St. Joseph, Western and Independence was still open. This was of the greatest consequence, as Generals Curtis, commanding the Kansas Department, and Blunt must co-operate with Rosecrans or keep entirely aloof. Shelby captured over a regiment across the river at Glasgow. Price was now recruiting

and foraging successfully. Lexington was entered and Blunt driven west of Independence. Rosecrans at St. Louis, telegraphed Pleasanton and Smith to follow Price to Lexington. They pursued and that was all, as Price burned bridges and thus easily avoided them, striking Curtis and Blunt a hard blow as he advanced. Rosecrans ere this reached Jefferson City, *i.e.*, he took the *field* by telegraph, as before. Price reached Independence and received a good pounding from Pleasanton, but a severer one soon after on the Big Blue, where Curtis was detaining him for Pleasanton. Price's retreat was now a flight. *En route* to Arkansas, he lost by capture ten guns, Generals Marmaduke and Cabell and many other prisoners. It was his last raid. Grant was dissatisfied with the conduct of the pursuit by Rosecrans, and historians who always *know*, say Rosecrans erred in abandoning the westward route to follow to Lexington.

At Jefferson City, Rosecrans issued an order as follows:

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo., October 18, 1864.

General Field Order No. 2.

For obvious reasons no person will be permitted to remain in telegraph offices except the employés of the office, and no person will be allowed within hearing of the instrument, except on business, which must not be made an excuse for lounging in the office beyond the necessary time. Operators will be held strictly responsible for the execution of this order.

By command of Major General Rosecrans.

J. F. BENNETT, *A. A. G.*

The Rolla, Springfield line was repaired October 12. Colonel Albert Sigel commanding at Rolla, entered the telegraph office and demanded the news of W. S. Forsey, the operator. Forsey replied that he knew none, but would report any that came. While the operator was sending a telegram to Sanborn, Sigel wished Forsey to telegraph Mrs. Sigel that he was safe and well. Forsey insisted on sending military messages first, and got into trouble. A sergeant and two soldiers marched the operator to the guard-house. Forsey's assistant telegraphed Captain Clowry and he Rosecrans, with the following result:

To Colonel Sigel:

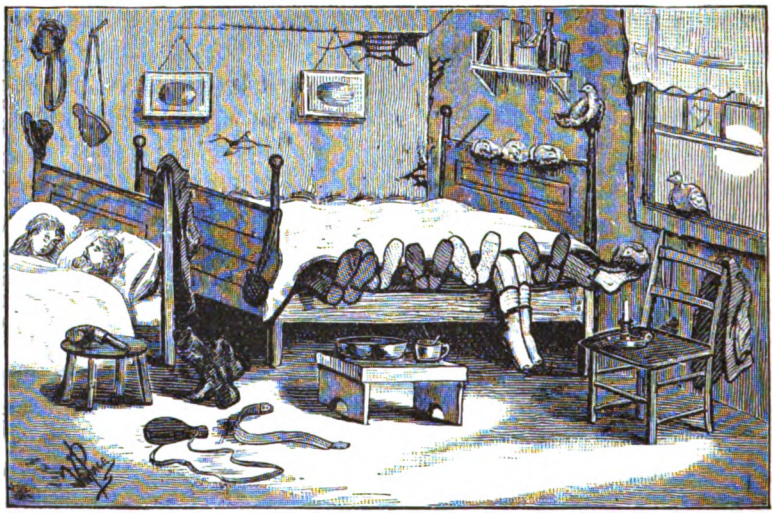
Your conduct in arresting Mr. Forsey is in direct violation of order No. 2. Release him at once, and report the facts to these head-quarters. W. S. Rosecrans, *Genl. Comdg.*

and so the the matter dropped.

Farther down the line R. N. Howell, operator at Cassville, and Harden Case at Fayetteville, were having their experiences. These men went to their respective stations in the spring of 1864. Lieutenant Colonel Cameron of the Second Arkansas cavalry, commanded at Cassville, and Colonel M. LaRue Harrison of the First Arkansas cavalry, at Fayetteville. Howell had seven repairers, whose duty it was to keep up the line on both sides, especially toward Fayetteville. They succeeded poorly for awhile. In the summer, notice was posted on poles that any repairer caught mending the line would be shot on the spot. Nevertheless they were undaunted until one forenoon, they barely escaped with loss of tools, because they were better mounted than the guerrillas, who chased them into Cassville. The line was cut as fast as repaired, and abandoned south during the summer. The Cassville office was in a prison cell in the Court House, which General Price had previously used to stable his horses. When Price entered South-eastern Missouri, Coffee, with about seven hundred men moved direct for Cassville, but passed it, moving to the east. Colonel Harrison and wife and other officers and their ladies, accompanied by several companies of Harrison's cavalry, were out on a pleasure and foraging expedition, and reached Cassville when Coffee's movements were reported. Owing to Coffee's presence in the vicinity, the expedition halted at Cassville. General Sanborn at Springfield, at four P. M., telegraphed an order directing the troops at Cassville to move at once, to Springfield, and as this meant evacuation, Howell prepared to go too. But Harrison insisted on his remaining. Major Melton in command (Cameron was at Springfield) protested against it, but Harrison put Howell in his office and a guard at the door. At eleven P. M., the next day, Howell discovered to his surprise, that all of Harrison's men were mounted and in a few minutes they were off, leaving the operator *the only man in Cassville*, which was fifty-five miles from Springfield.

After cogitating over the situation some time, Howell telegraphed Sanborn the state of affairs, ending his message "for God's sake, send some relief to get me away, as there is not a horse, mule or cow here to ride on." Falling asleep at last, Howell was rudely but happily awakened by Major Melton himself, who had come with his force to the operator's rescue.

About this time Gregg, operator at Springfield, found himself a bran-new wife, and it so happened that they, Howell and six



THE ORIGINAL SEVEN SLEEPERS.

others stopped over night at a farm house, where there was but one spare room; in that were two beds. Gregg and wife took one of these and Howell and six soldiers lay cross-wise of the other, leaving their feet well out "for the chickens to roost on." These were the original seven sleepers, Mark Twain to the contrary notwithstanding.

Colonel Harrison reached Fayetteville safely, but was besieged from October 28, by Colonel Brooks, with two thousand Confederates, until Fagan's division of Price's army joined Brooks, only to be easily, speedily and handsomely beaten off by Curtis, who came to Harrison's relief. Harden Case, better known as Hard Case, operator, was at Fayetteville during the two weeks' siege.

Thus ended the last great raid into Missouri. A. J. Smith's forces hurried to Thomas' aid at Nashville. Price, beside losing heavily by desertion, lost one thousand, nine hundred and fifty-eight prisoners, most of his wagons and other material; moreover, his remaining army was now only a disintegrating crowd.

The Fort Scott line was extremely useful during Price's movements, but it so happened that just before they began, Anthony R. Walsh and Joseph K. Porter, operators on this circuit, at Paola, were imprisoned on charge of disloyalty. They were tried at Fort Leavenworth, and, to use the language of Byington's report, written shortly after, "were proven loyal beyond a doubt, and the principal witness against them was impeached." This trial cost each of them nearly three months' salary.

As signally illustrative of the anomalous position the military telegrapher occupied, it will be interesting to note that Charles A. Hammann, who was assistant superintendent in Missouri, as we have seen; Edgar H. Brown, and James D. McGuire (prominent military operators for over three years), Neil Stewart and Clinton S. Barrett, while actually continuing in the Federal Military Telegraph service, as operators, were drafted late in 1864. It was an outrage on the entire corps. Search warrants, so to speak, had been sent to army commanders, to ascertain if any operators were in the ranks — generally resulting, in 1864, in reports like this one: "I am directed by Brigadier General Solomon, commanding Third Division, Army of Arkansas, to inform you that, after a careful investigation, no telegraph operators were discovered in this Division." No, they had been furloughed, or discharged to enter the telegraph service. Even Major Eckert urged Clowry so strongly to send operators East, that he complied by forwarding W. H. Woodring, Charles H. Mixer, Joseph L. Sears and John W. Gregg, at the very time (Price's raid) when they were in greatest need in Missouri. It was while Price was before the State capital, that Hammann, Brown and McGuire were drafted and mustered into Company H, Eighteenth Missouri Volunteer infantry, to *be detached at once*, by order of General Rosecrans, that they might serve as operators. The ignominy of being drafted, however, attached to them. In Little Rock, the Assistant Superintendent, Theodore Holt, mustered all his employés "for the draft, and locked

the roll *in the safe*, where," he wrote, " it will stay until the draft is over," which was quite right.

Late in November, efforts were made to re-establish communication with Fort Smith, but hardly had it been accomplished when General Canby ordered the destruction of the fort and the evacuation of towns on the Arkansas, above Little Rock.

General Steele left Little Rock, December 17, to be succeeded by General Reynolds. General Carr was in temporary command. Carr accompanied Steele to Pine Bluff, and the next morning manifested his new authority by arresting operator James A. Shrigley. Superintendent Holt reported the affair at the time, as follows: " Carr went over to the Bluff yesterday with the General; came into Shrigley's office about six, A. M., this morning, to ascertain the whereabouts of the train, and (as Shrigley says) became angry because he could not raise 'B' at that hour, and placed Shrigley under arrest and came away. At 7:30 (office hour) 'B' was on hand, and Shrigley did the work *under guard*. He was released by General Andrews as soon as Carr left on the train. I have instructed Shrigley to make a sworn statement of the affair, which I will forward to you, and which, if possible I hope you will carry through, at least far enough to show Carr that he don't own the Telegraph Corps." Assuming the above to be a true statement of the affair, it falls short of the idiocy and cruelty of a major general in Knoxville, Tenn., who told Captain Gross, notwithstanding the line was down, that if he did not telegraph a certain message to a distant station within an hour, he would be shot.

An idea of the magnitude of the Military Telegraph service in Missouri, Arkansas and Kansas for twelve months, ending July 1, 1864, may be gathered from the fact that there were telgraphed two hundred and thirty-two thousand messages—over twenty thousand per month—an average of six hundred and sixty-six *per diem*. Four hundred and twenty-three thousand six hundred and ninety were sent the succeeding year. Seven hundred and forty-nine miles of new line were constructed up to July 1, 1864, making a total in operation at that time of thirteen hundred and twenty miles, which does not include abandoned lines and those in Arkansas, turned over to Captain Clowry, aggregating two hundred and twenty-seven miles more. The en-

tire cost of this work, for the year ending June 30, 1864, was $137,153.44. During the fall of 1864, Captain Clowry operated seventeen hundred and two miles of wire. A quarter of a million of messages were sent the last six months of 1864. Such figures leave no room for a supposition that the war in those States was not planned with reference to and conducted largely by means of the telegraph.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE TELEGRAPH IN TENNESSEE, ALABAMA AND GEORGIA.—FORREST CAPTURES TROOPS AND OPERATORS AT ATHENS.—HIS RAID IN TENNESSEE.—OPERATOR'S EXPERIENCE ABOUT ATHENS.—EXPERIENCES IN CAHABA PRISON.—JOHNSONVILLE BURNED.—HOOD'S ARMY ON SHERMAN'S RAILROAD.—HOW ALLATOONA WAS SAVED.—MANAGER OF ATLANTA OFFICE ARRESTED.—SHERMAN STARTS FOR THE SEA.—FRANKLIN.—OPERATORS CAPTURED; THEIR ESCAPE.—HOOD'S WATERLOO.

The free and border States were struggling over election issues in a heated and bitter Presidential contest, when we took leave of General Sherman on his triumphal entry into the city of Atlanta, Ga., in September, 1864. If it was a prize, it was a troublesome one, for no sooner had Sherman entered the city, without seriously crippling the Confederate army, than he discovered that it would be ruinous to remain; that to retire, even in pursuit of an army on his communications, would count for lost that which had been fairly won, and to advance, he must sever his railroad connections in order to go far enough to do service; in short, he must proceed to Mobile, Savannah, Charleston, or Augusta and the rear of Richmond. It is not our province to discover here why he preferred Savannah.

Before any move was deemed feasible, he regarded it necessary to collect thirty days rations, at Atlanta, for his whole marching army. In no preliminary service was the railroad and telegraph more important than pending Sherman's preparations. The enemy felt this to be so, and tried to destroy these advantages, as we shall see. A second line of telegraph was built from Chattanooga to Atlanta (one hundred and thirty-eight miles), to aid the railroad officials, who by the use of the wire and long switches at stations, nearly doubled the capacity of the track. Colonel W. W. Wright, the Military Superintendent of this road, earned

the thanks of the nation for his comprehensive, energetic and skillful management of this railway; but nothing is clearer than the fact that without the telegraph, the road, even if protected could not have supplied daily more than the army ate.

As preparation for war often ensures peace, so the fact that the presence of an enemy at any given station in the rear of Atlanta was at once communicated to all points, made raids by infantry detachments impracticable, and even cavalry incursions produced but a *minimum* of damage; results by no means commensurate with the preparations of the enemy.

Hood, who had left Lovejoy for Palmetto, Ga., some time before, crossed the Chattahoochee late in September, intent upon striking Sherman's communications and drawing the Union army into Tennessee or Kentucky.

Co-operating with this movement, General Forrest with eight thousand cavalry — the Confederates were always strong in the saddle—started for middle Tennessee, expecting to work great destruction. The Federal cavalry north of Chattanooga was far inferior in number and considerably scattered. Stockades could not withstand artillery. Posts were garrisoned by few troops. In short Sherman's Tennessee roads were seriously threatened; by them, all of his forces south of Nashville, and even in East Tennessee, were supplied almost from hand to mouth. Sherman understood Forrest had gone to Mobile, where in truth some of his forces had been sent, and was therefore surprised when on the 24th of September the telegraph announced to him that, the garrison at Athens, Ala., about six hundred strong, and later on the same day, two relieving regiments, had surrendered to Forrest. Generals R. S. Granger at Decatur, Steedman at Chattanooga and Rousseau at Nashville, District commanders, were also apprised. General Thomas was sent from Atlanta to attend to Forrest, and Morgan's Federal division followed the same day. Telegrams were hurried to Memphis to send infantry and cavalry to Eastport, Miss. Rousseau came down to Pulaski and headed off Forrest, who turned toward Dechard on the Chattanooga road, but before reaching it in force, he ascertained that Steedman was awaiting his coming. Thus baffled, Forrest sent about half of his force under Buford to Huntsville, Ala., and again with the remainder struck the Decatur road, this time at

Spring Hill, October 1. At this point he entered the telegraph office. His operator claims to have here received several official telegrams concerning the positions of pursuing forces, and to have ascertained from one of them that Steedman had turned down the road to intercept Buford's troops. Forrest tried by misleading messages to deceive Rousseau, who had gone back to Nashville to take the other road, but soon found that officer after him with infantry in wagons. Chattanooga and Nashville were in telegraphic connection *via* Cumberland Gap when the more direct wires were cut, and thus Forrest's and Buford's respective forces were watched. They were driven, the one by Rousseau and the other by Steedman, across the Tennessee, and the roads and telegraph promptly repaired, but Washburne's troops from Memphis, in recrossing at Eastport, were severely handled by a portion of Forrest's.

As illustrative of the telegrapher's experiences along the more exposed portions of the Decatur line in the summer and fall of 1864, we will briefly mention those of the operators at Athens. James E. Pettit who, as a soldier, had participated in the battle of Falling Waters, Va., and as a quarter-master's clerk had been present at the siege of Vicksburg, took charge of the Athens office in June, 1864. Murdock Platt Burr, chief operator of this line, was located at Athens, and John F. Ludwig, after a short service at Brownsboro and Larkinsville, became assistant operator. Sam Wireman, a cavalryman, was messenger. One day in August Burr and Sam, returning by horse from Decatur, were about five miles from Athens when they espied five unmounted bushwhackers just emerging from the woods. Burr, whose life had been threatened by prowling banditti, on discovering them, quietly said to Sam: "We must not be taken prisoners; hold your pistol on the off side and do as I do." As they approached the bushmen cried, "Halt!" and one leveled his shot gun at them, whereupon Burr pleasantly remarked, "Come, my friend, lower that gun; it looks ugly and might go off." This request, so happily made, was as graciously acceded to. By this time Burr and Wireman had come up. Then Burr, uttering a terrific yell, plunged his spurs deep into the flanks of his horse and at the same time began discharging his revolver at the guerrillas. Wireman was quick to do like-

wise. One of the five was thrown to the ground by one of the horses, another is believed to have been wounded, and the remaining three did not recover from their surprise in time to use their shot guns effectively. It so happened that Wireman's horse threw a clod of dirt against his back as the enemy fired, which caused him to turn pale and cry out, "Burr, I'm shot!" Much inquiry as to the condition of his wound was subsequently made of Wireman, to his great embarrassment.

On another occasion Burr and Ludwig started at four P. M. to repair the wire north near Sulphur Trestle, where Colonel Hall commanded. Having mended the line and supped with Hall, they started after dark in a rain-storm to return. The roadway was, for the most part, skirted by timber, through which there were many wood-roads. After making a circuit, when they thought they were going south, and being halted by Hall's pickets, they were again started on the right road and again took a by-way, this time to discover their mistake at the end of the road deep in the woods. Retracing their steps until they thought they had struck the main road, they, in fact, diverged through another by-way, finally to pull up in front of a fence along a cleared field. It was now in the small hours, and the storm subsiding, they turned their horses into the field, and using their saddles for pillows wooed Morpheus. The mosquitoes prevented sleep. Near morning, however, Burr, when almost unconscious, was suddenly startled, and, rising, cocked his revolver as he called out, "Halt! who goes there?" After listening intently for some minutes he was answered with a grunt, and they knew it was a hog. After daylight they entered the main road near the trestle and reached home a sorry looking couple.

Once when General Roddy raided Athens, Pettit hid his instrument under the hotel in which he had his office, and then ran to safer quarters. At another time General Wheeler passed by the place with two thousand cavalry, not daring to attack. Ludwig was sent to Sulphur Trestle just before Wheeler got on the track, but as that officer cut the line on both sides of the stockade at the bridge, Ludwig could do no good. Wheeler passed on without attacking.

When Forrest captured Athens as above shown, he found

Pettit and Ludwig at the Fort. The former not believing that a large force was at hand, left his instrument and cipher key at his office, but Ludwig carried one set to the Fort, where he destroyed it to prevent capture. These operators had arranged to perform a soldier's part when an assault appeared imminent, and were deeply chagrined at being surrendered, as the troops were strongly posted. They were taken to Meridian, Miss., placed in a stockade and after a short stay, removed to Selma, Ala., and from thence to Cahaba, Ala., where they remained until March 14, 1865. During their stay at Cahaba, both were sick with fever a long time—Pettit for two months. The prison, called Castle Morgan, consisted of an old cotton shed with half of the roof blown off. It was located on the banks of the Alabama River, and there were twenty-eight hundred prisoners confined there at one time. The unexampled rains of that fall season caused the river to flood the prison. The shallowest place was over three feet deep, and in some places it was more than twelve feet. The prisoners floated in cord wood and built platforms on which they slept, there being bunk accommodations for only eight hundred. The water remained in the prison over eight days, and when it subsided, there were carried out three wheelbarrow loads of dead rats. The filth that collected within the prison at this time was poisonous and nauseating. Of course the noxious gases were destructive of life, especially to the sick. In the ward where Pettit and eleven others lay sick, *the eleven died.* Three boys, the eldest not eighteen, being wounded, cared for themselves, rejecting assistance; two of them died from gangrene. A soldier afflicted with the scurvy pealed off a perfect scab cast of the calf of his leg; another died of consumption, having lain in one position nine days and nights; the bare bones protruding through the skin at each shoulder blade and hip. Frozen feet were the rule not the exception. Sometimes during the coldest nights of the winter, all of the prisoners were on their feet to keep from freezing. Over a dozen captives were shot by the guards before March, 1865. Beef bones were cut into fanciful shapes and sold to the guards. Occasionally a few barrows of white bread were brought in and sold at three dollars per loaf, Confederate money, and sweet potatoes for a dollar apiece. When we next meet these opera-

tors, we will find one at Confederate head-quarters in direct and regularly telegraphic communication with Union head-quarters; the only instance of the kind during the war, where the connection was permanent.

After Forrest had refitted his force, he moved down the Tennessee River on the west, to the vicinity of Johnsonville, Tenn. capturing there one gun-boat, one steamer and some transports, which he destroyed, causing the Federals to burn other gun-boats and transports, besides about $1,000,000 worth of other Government property. It is supposed the operators there decamped with the colored troops.

Of course Hood was not inactive all this time. October 2, Stewart's corps, the van of the Confederate army, struck the railroad near Big Shanty and destroyed it for ten miles north. That very day General Sherman, who had notice of Hood's approach, was in the main city telegraph office a large portion of the time, and anticipating the destruction of the telegraph he *conversed* quite freely with officers in Washington, and the author's recollection is that these were President Lincoln, General Halleck and Secretary Stanton. While such telegraphic talks were unusual over such great distances, they were not new. As early as the time when Buell's headquarters were in Louisville and Halleck's in St. Louis, General McClellan, their chief at Washington, was thus in direct communication at once with Buell and Halleck at their quarters and Commodore Foote at Cairo, Ills. Each of these officers heard all that was said by all the others. The distance by the line was over thirteen hundred miles, and the conversation is said to have been maintained from eleven o'clock in the morning to six in the evening with the promptness of a personal interview; calling forth enthusiastic praise of the telegraph from all of these officers.

Of course many messages were sent to Sherman's post commandants on the Chattanooga road, and to Thomas, who had been sent after Forrest in Tennessee. At about five P. M. the line was cut, and Marietta became the most northerly station on the circuit. The next day Sherman left with his army, except the Twentieth Corps, commanded by General Slocum, and started in pursuit of Hood.

Allatoona, held by a small Federal brigade, was a fortified depot of supplies, and French's division was directed against it. From the Signal Hill at Vining's Station, on the fourth, Sherman ordered General Corse at Rome to reinforce the command at Allatoona. This important message was signaled to Allatoona over the approaching enemy, telegraphed to Kingston, where W. H. Drake was operator and train-despatcher, and, the line west being cut, sent by him by locomotive to Corse at Rome. This is perhaps the only instance during the war in which optical signaling, electricity, and steam united in the conveyance of an important order. There is no doubt but that had either miscarried, the stronghold at Allatoona, its defenders and supplies would have been captured. As it was, Corse was enabled to reach that place on the fourth and repel an attack the next day in which French lost over one thousand and the Federals seven hundred and seven, out of a force of nineteen hundred and forty-four. It is said that G. M. Farnham, operator at Allatoona, retired to a very disagreeable place, where he remained until the fighting was over. Perhaps there were no pleasant places thereabouts at that time.

Hood, moving to the west of Rome, appeared before Resaca on the eleventh, but deeming it imprudent to attack, moved north, destroying the road and telegraph for twenty-three miles and capturing Dalton and Tilton, but was driven off the road about the fifteenth, going into camp near Gadsden. Sherman pitched his tents at Gaylesville. The telegraph was completely restored on the twentieth and the railroad eight days later.

On the 1st of October W. R. Plum relieved Richmond Smith as manager of Atlanta office. On the eighth an operator near Allatoona informed Atlanta that signal officers had said, "We have reports that Grant is fighting three miles from Richmond. So far as we can learn all was progressing favorably." This report, like many other rumors that prevailed in those days, eagerly listened to but always discredited, was given to a newsdealer who bulletined it. General Slocum, who had taken command in the city about five days before, and who was personally unknown to the operators, felt outraged because he received the news from his *orderlies* who had read the bulletin, and to appease his mighty wrath, caused two armed soldiers to

march the manager to his quarters, whence, after an exhibition of official temper, the telegrapher was incarcerated among a lot of deserters, thieves, spies and the like about two hours, and until liberated at the personal solicitation of General Brannan, Colonel Parkhurst, Major Hoffman and Captain Willard, of General Thomas' staff, they having remained in Atlanta. Cass Sholes, chief operator, was refused an interview with the prisoner, and thereupon Sholes, John O. Ingle and C. W. Jacques, in the city office, and Joe Anderson and John Egan, in the railroad office, notified Slocum that until Plum was released they would close their offices. They also telegraphed General Sherman, signaling part of the way, but it was all over before a reply could come. It was an interesting day to the fraternity in Atlanta.

After driving Hood to Gadsden, Sherman, intent on his contemplated march to the sea, was preparing to move sixty thousand infantry, five thousand five hundred cavalry and sixty-five guns, leaving Hood with nearly fifty thousand, including Forrest's cavalry, to march into Middle Tennessee *via* Guntersville and Florence, Ala. On the 7th of November, the last train left Chattanooga for Atlanta.

The next day F. M. Speed was appointed chief operator of the Atlanta line, and Plum started to rejoin General Thomas, leaving in Atlanta nine operators, who were to accompany the army wheresoever it might go. About noon of the twelfth, one of the Chattanooga operators, probably Thomas Sampson, began sending the last despatch to be sent over the line. It was from Thomas to Sherman, and was being received by C. G. Eddy at Cartersville, when the wire was severed. Sherman's army was shut off from the North. His troops began the destruction of the railroads and telegraph south to Atlanta, from whence they were to march and fight, they knew not where, nor against what forces, and recked as little. Full of confidence, they were quite ready for any venture, for such it was really considered by many in the secret. On it hung untold hopes and fears of the Federals.

We will now attend to the affairs transpiring under General Thomas, and in another chapter chronicle the March to the Sea. After losing about one thousand men in efforts to capture Decatur, Hood moved west to Florence, and crossing the Ten-

nessee moved against the Nashville & Decatur road by various routes leading to Columbia. This was about the 19th of November, and it soon became evident that he would not follow Sherman as that officer had predicted, but that Thomas, with the odds and ends of Sherman's army rallied around Schofield's and Stanley's troops, about twenty-five thousand available for the field, must beat back that army which Sherman with his one hundred thousand had failed to destroy. Grant, with evident uneasiness, had consented to Sherman's move. Neither Grant, Sherman nor Thomas foresaw the delays that were yet to embarrass the latter in concentrating and equipping a suitable force to repel the invasion. As the enemy rapidly approached by many roads he was met and his advance hindered to enable reinforcements to come to Schofield, who was retiring from Pulaski and removing his army supplies and material largely by rail. The last week in November was one of supreme interest. The anxiety of the Administration, of Grant and Halleck, and of the people, was intense. From the first, Thomas had been watching and parrying Hood by telegraph. The despatches grew in frequency, in interest and earnestness, as the Confederates swept boldly on. Pulaski was abandoned. The entire line therefrom to Decatur and from Decatur to Stevenson was given up; Columbia was evacuated; the enemy was already with two corps of infantry well in the advance of many of the retiring Federal forces, and liable at any moment to strike them. All night the troops and wagon trains marched within hearing of the Confederates. That night march saved the trains and doubtless the army. Minor but severe conflicts were frequent.

Thomas, at the capital, anxiously watched the movements on Nashville. The next day, November 30, Schofield had passed his trains over the Harpeth, at Franklin, when, at about four, P. M., Hood emerged from concealing woods and ravines, and fell with mighty power upon Schofield's command. It was then, or never! If the army, scarce half assembled, without suitable defenses, could not be thoroughly beaten, behind the works of the capital, reinforced by A. J. Smith's twelve thousand and others, it surely could not. Both sides fought for Nashville at Franklin. In the onset the Southerners were amazingly successful. Two brigades were swept back, disorganizing others,

and batteries were taken. Then, under Stanley and Opdycke, the latter's brigade rushed into the breach with fixed bayonets. The strife was too harrowing for detail, when not required by the scope of the work; hence we spare it. The Federal line was regained, eight guns retaken; but the assaults were renewed with a valor unexcelled anywhere. It was courage *plus* desperation. Some said Hood had given his troops whisky and gunpowder. Doubtless, that was a slander. His were brave troops. They needed no false courage. The battle lasted, with occasional intermission, until midnight, and when the next day's sun arose, a sad scene was visible. Seventeen hundred and fifty Confederates lay dead on that field. Of these, five were generals. Thirty-eight hundred were wounded, of whom six were generals. One hundred and eighty-nine Federals were killed, and ten hundred and thirty-three wounded.

Nashville was saved to the Union. In that city there was no sleep. Before, its sixteen thousand citizens and ten thousand Government employés had been on the *qui vive* as its fate hung on the issue of battle. That was when Stone River was fought. Twice, earlier (Donelson, 1861, and the siege, 1862), it was doubtful which party would possess the city, but now a great struggle nearer than Donelson, nearer than Stone River, quite as fierce, but less protracted, was progressing. Steedman, with five thousand of Sherman's soldiers and a brigade of colored troops, had not arrived from Chattanooga. A. J. Smith's advance troops were debarking at Nashville while the battle was progressing. Donaldson's armed civilians were not fully prepared. Indeed, Thomas had but five thousand ready in the city. If the people were oppressed with the portents of the hour, how was it with Thomas on whom the grave responsibilities rested? How, with Military Governor Andrew Johnson, whose war record at least was above reproach? These men and Medical Director George E. Cooper were in the St. Cloud Hotel, counting the chances, when E. C. Boyle, then manager of the Nashville office, delivered Schofield's telegram to Thomas, giving the particulars of the battle. Johnson, more excitable than the others, evinced his joy by grasping Boyle's hands and shaking them cordially, saying at the same time, "The news is glorious."

The next day the enemy began investing Nashville, and tele-

grams increased in number and urgency. Nashville office was worked under a steady pressure. D. O. Dyer, George Everett, B. B. Glass, Ellis Wilson, John Thode, E. M. and G. H. Shape, and other experts, worked early and late. Almost as soon as Schofield's forces were posted about Nashville a field telegraph line, around the defenses, was constructed, connecting Thomas' head-quarters with those of his principal generals. which line was in constant use until the 16th of December.

Forrest now set about destroying the Nashville and Chattanooga road, beginning with the block-houses near Nashville, and including those at LaVergne and Smyrna. The latter was taken during the night of the fifth while the operators were asleep. It was an important part of the duty of Forrest's men to conscript every citizen they could find. The Smyrna operators, T. E. Rawlings and John T. Duell, were lodging at Doctor Kennedy's when three cavalrymen went there in search of a brother of the doctor's, who escaped. But they found the operators in bed and compelled them to mount, each behind a cavalryman, and ride twelve or fifteen miles before sunrise to General Bates' quarters, where they were severely catechised concerning Federal movements, after which the boys were turned over to the provost captain as prisoners of war. The first food they received was boiled beef, dealt out to each prisoner in pound pieces, without salt or bread. Rawlings threw his in the ditch—to regret it subsequently, as he received nothing more that day, except a bit of corn-pone at sundown. On the sixth, seventh, and eighth they witnessed portions of the fighting between Forrest's and Rousseau's forces at Murfreesboro, during which Forrest lost heavily. The guard with the prisoners hurried off in the direction of Smyrna, where, unable to find head-quarters, they camped by themselves regardless of the other troops, and building a log fire lay on the ground to sleep. That night a cold, drizzling rain fell and froze, covering trees and ground for many miles with a heavy sleet on which it was almost impossible to travel. Towards morning, the fire having deadened, Rawlings awoke nearly benumbed with cold, and looking about discovered that some of the prisoners had escaped and only one of the guard was awake, and he engaged parching corn. Nudging Duell, Rawlings whispered "now is our time," but Duell

did not believe it and Rawlings made his escape alone and went directly to Doctor Kennedy's, where he took quarters in the cellar where also was the doctor's brother John Kennedy, hiding from the conscript officers. And there the two remained about a week, when they were liberated by the Federals as we shall see. One day General Bates made his head-quarters in the doctor's house, and that evening and the next morning the good mother of the Kennedys took no victuals below, but by noon Bates left and a well filled basket was at once taken to the cellar. Duell was taken to Pulaski and confined upstairs over an old store-room, from which he escaped by means of a trap door in the rear room to the first floor and, personating a waiter carrying a pail (it being dark), he passed the guard standing at the door without difficulty, and then went to the residence of some one whom he either knew or knew of, and was hidden in the garret until relieved by the Union troops.

General Lyon crossing the Cumberland with a cavalry force, captured a train of cars on the Nashville Road near Clarksville, driving operators A. S. Hawkins and Martin E. Griswold in on the engine that was detached just in time to escape. Lyon pushed on through Hopkinsville, Elizabethtown, Burksville and into Alabama, having been badly used up by McCook, La Grange and Steedman.

At Nashville all was activity. Every night was robbed to lengthen the day and many a day was indeed of twenty-four hours duration. Thomas himself set an example of utilizing the small hours. His despatches bear dates including all times of the night. But there came a series of telegrams from City Point and Washington urging the General to attack. It was in vain that that officer replied that even if Hood was whipped, the cavalry being dismounted, he, Thomas, could not reap the fruits of victory; it was in vain that he urged the impossibility of the enemy's crossing the Cumberland patrolled by gun-boats and very high; in vain, that he replied that the roads were such that neither man nor beast could travel; in vain, that he offered to serve under any other commander; "Papa Thomas," the hero of Mill Springs, the commander of the center which was *not* whipped at Stone River, the Rock of Chickamauga and the grand soldier with whom Grant and Sherman had been pleased to

counsel, who had by telegraph conducted a most masterly retreat from Pulaski in the face of overwhelming numbers, Thomas the "true and prudent; distinguished in council, and on many battle fields celebrated by his courage," was to be judged and condemned at Washington and City Point. He was judged and he was condemned. In view of the astonishing patience of the Administration, when other generals full handed, delayed action for months, it will ever seem strange that Thomas could not have two weeks after one battle before beginning another.

December 9, the order appointing Schofield, Thomas' successor, was issued by direction of General Grant, but the authorities at Washington not being really willing to execute it, Grant was again asked if it should go forward, and it was withheld. On the thirteenth, General Logan was ordered to Nashville and General Grant started for there to take personal command. Beckwith as usual accompanied him. Arriving at Washington, on the fifteenth, Grant received Captain VanDuzer's telegram detailing Thomas' success of that day, and returning to his hotel, said to Beckwith, "Well, I guess we won't go to Nashville, Thomas has given Hood a good thrashing."

And so indeed it proved, for on that day, the six days' sleet disappearing, Thomas attacked. All night long, Thomas' despatch, date of nine P. M., of the fifteenth to Halleck, modest almost beyond precedent, was being repeated from one line to another, from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and at daylight, the entire North was rejoiced, for that Thomas had said, "Attacked enemy's left this morning; drove it from the river, below the city, very nearly to Franklin Pike, distance about eight miles." That night Thomas' chief operator was ordered by the General to accompany him the next day, which he did. On the sixteenth, about daylight, the troops again advanced against Hood, and before four P. M., his army was in full retreat, pressed on rear and flanks by infantry and cavalry. The Confederates having lost during the two days' battle, fifty-three pieces of artillery, thousands of small arms, twenty-five battle flags and four thousand, four hundred and sixty-two prisoners, besides the killed and wounded. Their army was now a routed mass, hurrying by night and by day to the Tennessee, which, not more than one-

half of his army re-crossed and that half in no condition for effective resistance.

VanDuzer and F. S. VanValkenburg were untiring in their zeal to open telegraphic communication with Thomas, at each bivouac. On the sixteenth, after following the enemy to Franklin, Thomas went into camp in the mud and rain at Brentwood, and there, as at every other camp as far as Pulaski, except one, the telegraph was O K at head-quarters. On the night of December 20, Thomas went into camp at Rutherford's Creek. After a ride from early morn in a drenching rain, with half a dozen orderlies and a lantern, the operator started for the railroad, to find the line and transmit important telegrams for Washington. One of the mules in the darkness fractured a leg, thus compelling the party to advance on foot. The rain fell in torrents on the ice-covered ground. The line was found, but no current, and after marching northward hoping to find the break believed to be near, as the party reached the creek their light went out and there was not a dry match to be had. It was therefore impossible to climb over the ruins of the bridge, and the party, cold and wet, felt their way back to camp to report the first and last telegraph failure of the campaign. On this trying advance, besides VanValkenburg, operators C. D. Whitney, C. D. Montanye, F. M. Speed, John T. Joyce, John Ingle, John Egan, C. C. Starling, J. W. Wickard and G. D. Wilkinson rendered efficient service. All of the lines abandoned on Hood's approach, were re-opened during the month of December, except that to Johnsonville, which was not repaired until January. Superintendent VanHorn, of the Confederate telegraph service, soon after wrote that the Decatur line was "left up," implying that no attempt was made to destroy it—a strong indication of the utter demoralization of the army, or of the hopelessness of the cause.

General Thomas returned to Nashville early in January, and soon started the final expeditions of the Department. All now began to think of peace. The North hailed Thomas' triumph with unrestrained enthusiasm. The glad tidings were overwhelming. Strong men wept for joy. Sherman's success was accomplished in Hood's defeat. It was like two great victories from one battle. Sherman was justified, but Thomas—he had

gained the greatest success thus far achieved on the open field between two such forces. His own losses in the entire campaign were about ten thousand, many of whom were slightly wounded. It was the last grand sacrifice of the war in the West.

The telegraphers during this time lost Frank B. Tyler and Robert Reaser from sickness. The surviving operators subscribed about one thousand dollars for those left dependent, and Captain VanDuzer installed Mrs. Reaser, an operatrix, in her consort's place, and thus she cared for his two children at Waverly, Tenn. The Government erects head-stones over the graves of soldiers, and pensions those dependent on them. Not so for the operator. Why?

CHAPTER XV.

SHERMAN'S MARCH TO THE SEA.—ATLANTA IN RUINS.—A GREAT PICNIC.—TAPPING THE ENEMY'S WIRES.—A VIEW WITHIN THE CONFEDERATE LINES.—STORMING FORT McALLISTER.—INTERESTING INCIDENTS.—SAVANNAH TAKEN.—TELEGRAPHIC CONNECTIONS.

We left General Sherman at Cartersville, Ga., November 12, 1864, standing by his operator, C. G. Eddy, who at the time was receiving General G. H. Thomas' final message. Before its completion, the line north was severed by Union troops, who had begun to destroy the railroad and telegraph. Thenceforth, for many anxious days, an army exceeding sixty thousand in number was to the Northern people, as it were, in utter darkness. It was worse than temporarily lost, because besides a natural suspense, anxiety was aggravated by reports of the destruction of that great body which represented so many households. This expeditionary movement was to be of infinite value in calling peoples' attention to the beneficent advantages of the telegraph, which, like health, is most appreciated when lost.

Just before Sherman left Kingston, Ga., he telegraphed Captain Poe, Chief of Engineers, to prepare for destruction all round-houses, depots, store-houses and buildings that might be used as store-houses. Fire, powder and twenty-one foot railroad iron battering rams, swung from ten foot wooden horses and worked by a swinging chain fastened to the center of the bar, caused fearful havoc. After the Chattanooga Railroad round-house had been thus in two hours battered down and that on the Macon road fired, Poe turned his attention to the large passenger depot. Then came the stone ware-house and brick depot; the former was mined, then operator Joe Anderson's office and buildings around it. Then the Trout house, the main telegraph office building, and nearly all Whitehall street besides not a few residences. Such fires always extend beyond one's

wishes, so this exceeded Sherman's. A prominent Confederate telegrapher who arrived at Atlanta *via* Jonesboro shortly after the army left, at the time thus described appearances:

> The road between Jonesboro and Atlanta bears the marks of many a fierce struggle. As you approach Atlanta from the south, at every mile you strike first the Confederate breastworks and rifle pits, then the similar defenses of the Yankees: the torn shrubbery, the scarred oaks, the hastily constructed grave with its humble pine head-board, giving the name and regiment of the men of both armies, scattered here and there in twos and threes along the road, all tell the tale, if the burned houses, the desolate chimney stacks, and deserted dwellings, once the scene of peaceful domestic happiness, failed to bring the horrors of war before one's mind. But Atlanta caps the climax. Huge fortifications of red dirt wind snakelike around its whole extent; dead mules and horses and fragments of slaughtered beeves lie around; the absence of all life in the town itself, with its smouldering walls, tall naked chimney shafts, with only an occasional glimpse, as I rode along, of a solitary individual slowly picking his way over the masses of brick and *debris* in the streets, leaves an impression on the mind not easily described. It is appalling: Atlanta now stands like a grinning skull on the wayside; a fragmentary memento of a former life and greatness.

Colonel VanDuzer had obeyed instructions in directing nine operators to report for service on this march. These were furnished, each, with a cipher key and pocket telegraph instrument. They were, Richmond Smith, chief operator, generally at the headquarters of the army; C. G. Eddy at Sherman's; Joseph Anderson with Jeff C. Davis who commanded the Fourteenth Corps; John Lonergan with Osterhaus who commanded the Seventeenth Corps, and later with General Howard's (right wing) where C. G. Sholes was located. D. T. Berry went with Slocum, commander of the left wing; P. J. Murray probably with General Blair (Seventeenth Corps); —— Waterhouse with General Williams (Twentieth Corps) or the chief of artillery, and William H. Drake with Kilpatrick, who commanded the cavalry, about six thousand strong. The operators were well prepared for a long march. VanDuzer had even taken the precaution to send Edward P. Whitford with funds to pay them

off. Whitford, a bright lad for one so young, occupied the responsible position in Nashville of cipherer and assistant clerk at VanDuzer's headquarters, where most of Governor Johnson's and General Webster's telegrams were ciphered.

Scarcely had the operators left the city, when they entered upon the enjoyments of a sort of authorized pillage. It is proverbial that there is no fruit like stolen fruit, so applying the saying to all the substantials, and many of the delicacies of the season, the reader will appreciate that the telegraphers and army also, had entered upon a "promised land." Turkeys, geese, chickens, pigs, bacon, sheep, cattle, sweet potatoes, peanuts, corn meal, honey, molasses, wines, milk, eggs, fruits and scores of other articles, not to be thought of until discovered.

The march resulted in two things; first, a vast foraging expedition through the heart of the Confederacy, and second, a change of base. From Atlanta to Savannah, no enemy was met which Sherman's cavalry could not probably have routed unaided. Chief Smith and two signal officers, Cole and Jones, were (November 19) hunting for horses in the advance, and just as they were about to enter Newborn, Ga., they were fired upon by guerrillas, but the latter knew that a great army was behind and stopped not to see the whites of any eyes, consequently no bones were broken. Lieutenant Jones at least was not deterred, for that day he brought in two horses and five mules. Captain Cole could hardly bring in himself, having found six bottles of blackberry wine somewhere. All this time, *i. e.*, for several days back, the chief operator had been barely able to ride at all, owing to his horse being lame. Those offered him seemed more undesirable. The planters were careful to run off or hide their best horses, but a "warrior bold" on a limping horse does not attract so much attention as Joe Anderson did several days later when advancing from Sandersville. Joe's saddle was too good to keep, and somebody *foraged* it. For some miles he rode bare back, cutting of course an extremely undignified figure; but ere night he "borrowed" a lady's side-saddle and rapidly grew conspicuous. General Davis about this time tied up a couple of soldiers for stealing silk dresses, which he compelled them to wear during a day's march behind a wagon with the word "stolen" posted in large letters on their backs. Had the General

given Joe one of these to go with his saddle, the soldiers of the Fourteenth Corps would have restrained the jocularity, with which they pelted the smooth faced operator. As it was he said nothing, but unutterably looked *Ride si sapis.*

November 22, General Sherman entered Milledgeville, Georgia's capital. Richmond Smith hurried to the telegraph office, but operator Berry had preceded him by one day. Even Berry failed, not however because the Confederate States' operator had run off leaving only a lightning arrester and some valueless messages from Governor Brown, for W. H. Drake had preceded him and tapped the line between Macon and Milledgeville. Kilpatrick's cavalry had cut the wire on the Milledgeville side, else Drake might have listened successfully; as it was, his attempt to deceive the Macon operators was abortive also. It will be remembered that Drake was the operator who spelled out "Lebanon Junction" (Ky.) for General John Morgan's operator, Ellsworth, consequently he was exceedingly anxious to turn the joke somehow on the Confederates. Soon after putting his instrument "in circuit," Drake heard some one calling "Md." It was Macon office and it had important messages to send. Drake correctly surmised that "Md." meant Milledgeville, and answered "ii, ii, Md." That meant, here am I, go ahead; but Macon was suspicious and asked as a sort of countersign, "what is your name?" That was a hard question, for Drake's name wasn't a pass-word on that wire and he did not know that of the Milledgeville operator. So after a little safe bravado the dialogue closed and Drake re-entered the saddle; then Kilpatrick's men began destroying the line on the Macon side. Arriving at Sandersville, Ga., Eddy tried his hand on the wires running to Augusta. He discovered in the office what every "plug" operator keeps, but never refers to, and what a good operator seldom has, viz.: a list of the "calls" of the offices on the line. It was found that "A" meant Augusta, "9" Millen and "F" Tenille. The wire west had been cut. Eddy connected the main line with his ground wire and circuit "closed." Immediately "A" began calling "F." Eddy said "ii, ii, F." "A" thereupon repeats the natural question, "Who is it?" but as Eddy had heard that Barney Hughes was the fugitive operator, he had a ready answer. Still Augusta was suspicious, but was at last

convinced that it was Hughes indeed. "A" says, "What news from our (rebel) forces, and where have you been all day?" Eddy replied, "The Yankees drove me out this morning, and I came back after they had retired. Have heard nothing late from the forces at Sandersville." Things were working finely and doubtless news and telegrams would have soon come to Eddy, but at this moment General Jeff. C. Davis' troops struck the wire between "A" and "F," and thus ended that effort.

That day (twenty-sixth) the Augusta *Constitutionalist* in an editorial inquired, Where is Sherman? and called on the people to rally and make the Oconee Sherman's river of death. At this very time his army was east of the Oconee. Surely Sherman's great command was lost to the Southern and Northern people alike. Throughout the entire country there was now extreme solicitude about these Federal forces. The North feared the army would be overwhelmed and the South was in distress lest it should not be. Neither side had any telegraphs — Sherman had left his own and was fast destroying those in his wake —only, the wake came *after* the demolition. Of course new lines or advanced portions of others were constantly met intact, but there are so many outriders to such an army that their presence is but little indicative of the whereabouts or route of the main columns.

December 1 the Union forces were in the vicinity of Herndon, Ga. Portions of the army had had a brush near Macon, and Kilpatrick's cavalry another near Augusta, but that was about all worthy of note, here.

These things indicate what a picnic it was to the main army; they also show what a sweep that army was making. It started from Atlanta by destroying, it is said, two millions of dollars' worth of property. Every day's march added to that great sum. Georgia was feeling the evils of war. A mock legislature had been held in her very capitol by Federal officers, who after a heated discussion passed a resolution restoring the State to the Union.

About this time General Howard proposed sending a scouting party of fourteen far out from the army and Sholes gladly acceded to his request to accompany it. Howard's idea was for the party to ride by night and hide by day until well out, when

Sholes was to tap the enemy's line. After riding until very late the first night the party unexpectedly dashed into a stream which crossed the highway, when a stentorian voice across cried "Halt, who goes there?" "Federals," responded one of the party, and instantly the picket fired. The Federals retreated in hot haste followed some distance by the enemy, numbering, as was learned the next day, two regiments.

It was near Millen that Smith and Eddy, after going into camp walked to the telegraph office and testing, found current from Savannah, but neither of the operators had their instruments. Waterhouse was also in camp nearer. When his instrument was connected the "circuit" was gone. Probably the soldiers had torn down the line a little ahead to make pot hooks. Waterhouse however had better success on the Augusta line. He worked with that office until two A. M., but the Confederate messages were frauds, intended for the "Yanks"; an uncommon but by no means untried ruse to deceive an enemy. One of these was a telegram nominally at least from General Longstreet in Augusta to General Wheeler at some point south, saying "I will leave here in the morning with ten thousand men." Other messages partook of the same character. These were new tricks in war. The Rebellion first developed them. Every war opens up some new notions to deceive. Deception is legitimate. It is a part of the *art* of war. The very essence of military science consists in getting what, in anything else, would be an undue advantage. Even Christian soldiers, like Howard, must concede that the ninth commandment has no application in war so far as *their* side is concerned; hence a good telegraphic lie is much sought after. Ellsworth manipulated them successfully for the wily General John Morgan, and Whitthorne served General Forrest in like manner. But the story, currently believed, that on the occasion of the capture, in August, 1862, of Manassas Junction, Va., by General Stuart's cavalry, his operator, in Union General Pope's name telegraphed, to General Rucker in Washington, D. C., for tents and other supplies, which—as the report goes—were at once forwarded by rail and used by the Confederates, is wholly unfounded. That other yarn that comes across the Atlantic, that Morgan, when he invaded Ohio, procured horses from Cincinnati on a

like requisition, is also an interesting invention. Stoneman and Gillem—Union generals—raiding from East Tennessee; Grierson and others in Mississippi; in short, most of the very prominent cavalry leaders on either side have profited by the deceptions of their telegraph operators.

Operator Lonergan tapped the enemy's line in the rear of General McLaw's head-quarters, near Station seven (Scarboro). Major Whittle, assistant provost marshal general, Captains Taggart and B——d and Lieutenant Sampson, signal officer, probably all staff officers, were present. Lonergan intercepted messages from Hardee, the opposing commanding general, to General McLaws, giving the movements of Bragg, on Sherman's rear from Augusta, also those of the cavalry; the number of rations forwarded and other information. All of which was highly important eavesdropping; so much so that General Howard directed Lonergan to make an official report thereof for General Sherman. When Lonergan and the others were about to quit the line, Captain B——d dictated a despatch in General Howard's name, which Lonergan sent to Hardee in Savannah, inviting the latter to remain there and dine with him (Howard) on Christmas. General Howard was greatly provoked at this unauthorized use of his name, because socially he had great respect for Hardee; B——d was allowed to go North *via* Savannah very soon after reaching there, but there seems even more reason in General Sherman's dissatisfaction, which was, that it showed too clearly his whereabouts. Of course by this time the fact that Savannah was the objective, was quite clear and so much of the message as requested Hardee to await Howard's coming, may not have been hurtful. Lonergan got off with a good scolding, but the Savannah operators were even more abusive.

Having followed Sherman's army about two hundred and twenty-five miles, and to within seventy of Savannah, let us withdraw the Confederate curtain, and, looking at the *débris* which marked the heavy tread, see its effects also on the Confederate mind. By the time General Sherman left Atlanta, the Confederate telegraphers had well nigh exhausted all sources of material supply. Even in the city of Petersburg, Va., horses

could not be procured for line repairers except by *borrowing* for each trip of the quarter-master. Superintendent Merriwether, at Mobile, sent out to Pascagoula to take all insulators and brackets off that wire to Hall's Mills, in order that he might overhaul and repair the line from Tensas River to Montgomery. Nearly all the telegraph wire in the Confederacy was already on poles. Much of that was nearly valueless, owing to rust. Copying paper, very like that used for printing newspapers, was three dollars per pound. Zinc, in which was a preponderance of type metal, was two dollars and fifty cents per pound. Sulphuric acid was twenty dollars per pound. Peanut oil was used for light in lamps that cost fifteen dollars each. It was while the supplies in the Confederacy were about exhausted, that Sherman's army began a march which involved the tearing down of five hundred miles of telegraphs in Georgia alone. What could more effectually work that end than the means used, of heating the centers of the railroad iron, and twisting the bars around telegraph poles. At this time J. B. Tree was General Superintendent of the seaboard lines, which included nearly all in Sherman's path. L. R. Hoopes was manager of Columbus, Ga., office; Wm. M. Nettles, of Montgomery; D. E. Norris, at Macon, assisted by operators A. H. Moffatt and A. W. York; J. A. Brenner, assistant superintendent at Augusta, Ga.; and C. G. Merriwether, assistant superintendent at Mobile, where William Sandford was manager of the city office.

Two days after Sherman's army began its march, G. T. Beauregard, General-in-chief in the West, telegraphed as follows:

IUKA, November 17, 6:30 P. M., 1864.

Forwarded from Selma to

LIEUTENANT GENERAL TAYLOR, Macon, Ga.:

Adopt Fabian system. Don't run risk of losing your force and guns to hold any one place or position, but harass the enemy at all points. *Hannibal held heart of Italy sixteen years and then was defeated.* Be cool and confident, and all will yet be right. I will join you soon as possible. (Signed) G. T. BEAUREGARD, *General.*

This, of course, meant the abandonment of Macon, should Sherman appear in dead earnest to want it. Consequently, Merriwether was sent to that city to pack up all surplus materials

ready for instant shipment to Montgomery. By the twenty-second, all communication *via* Millen with Augusta and Savannah was cut off. On the twenty-third, Tree telegraphed Brenner, of Augusta: "Keep your offices open night and day. If you have to fall back, take it coolly and gather up the operators, instruments and material as you retire. If the enemy diverge from the Central or Georgia Road, establish an office at the end of the break and send your business through by couriers. We will do the same at the Macon end." This message went *via* Columbus, Ga., Tallahassee, Fla., and Savannah—the only route then open. Next day, that line was cut south of Macon. Then operator Conner started out with a relay to try and flank Sherman's army on the direct route to Savannah. He must have found it a serious undertaking. The great cry now, from Macon to Mobile and thence to Corinth, was "Where is Sherman?"

Beauregard, not thinking that Fabius Maximus harassed Hannibal without any telegraphs, was himself paralyzed for want of one, although Sherman, like Hannibal, also without any, was whipping everything he could reach. Leave Sherman's bummers sixteen years raiding in any country, and it would not raise sorrel!

C. T. Campbell, chief operator of Montgomery office, and —— Logan, an assistant, were hurried off to Atlanta to collect wire from the Chattanooga Road, to reconstruct the line to West Point. One wire from Montgomery to Opelika was taken down for the same purpose. John K. Mingle was sent up the Blue Mountain line toward Hood's command, to see what could be done in that direction. Merriwether went to Jonesboro, Ga., to hurry the work on to Atlanta by the Macon Road. The old Demopolis line was taken down, and December 3, the Tallahassee wire was being debated. Beauregard was demanding a line to Augusta, *via* West Point and Atlanta. Tree was pushing everybody and everything, but he was manacled. No railroads—little wire—insulators wanting—wagons hard to get, and soldiers would not work. Merriwether started east from Macon early, rebuilt the line for nine miles, when he was driven back, and idled five days for the hostile cavalry to leave. December 4, he reached Oconee, but no one yet knew where Sherman was, and the great inquiry among telegraphers west of the armed simoon was, "Have the

Yanks destroyed the line to Millen?" Next day, it was learned that both wires on the Central Road, beginning three miles east of Macon to Millen, had been destroyed. Out of the *débris* and collected wire, Merriwether was trying to patch a line to the latter place. In time he succeeded, but three hundred insulators were wanting. What a line for a quadruplex instrument!

The Federals now moved out from Pensacola to Pollard, the junction of the Mobile & Great Northern Railroad with the Alabama & Florida Road, and at eleven, A. M., of December 15, Mobile was cut off. The next day, report comes *via* Macon and Albany Railroad, that the Yankees have cut the Gulf Road at or about the Ogeechee River, and destroyed the bridge. Here is a Confederacy cut into three pieces. Augusta is at one point of the triangle, Savannah at another, and Richmond the third. Within these lines is one Confederacy, but sorely perplexed, and Grant is pounding at the head while Sherman cuts the tail. In the great middle Confederation, Thomas is driving Hood pell-mell out of Tennessee, and Captain VanDuzer is restoring Union telegraphs far south. To the west, Mobile by the Gulf lies in great danger, and Corinth is to be speedily abandoned. Then, there is another long stretch of country, from Meridian to a point far west of the Mississippi and far south of Missouri, where a third federation barely lives. All of these acknowledge but one head, it is true; but that is the best and most generally abused head in all the South. If the Fates did not then foretell, events must at least have cast a warning shadow. Such had now become the feeling in Georgia, that residents along the route of the Federal line from Atlanta to Rossville, a distance of twenty-six miles, had appropriated all the wire and refused to surrender it; but a guard of Confederate soldiers was effective. At Ackworth were many coils of abandoned wire, but the *Confederates* were afraid of bushwhackers and dared not go after it. It was January 1, before Brenner's men from Augusta completed the line to Millen. Then, for the first time in two weeks, was Richmond in communication with Mobile by any route. For a long time the Government freight route was from Augusta, *via* the Georgia Railroad to Greensboro, thence by wagon to Eatonton, and thence by rail, *via* Milledgeville and Gordon, one hundred and forty-five

miles. The repair of the Central Road east of Gordon was abandoned.

From Scarborough to near Pooler, close by Savannah, it was only a goodly march, except over to the left where Kilpatrick again attacked Wheeler successfully, though it was quite an affair. Richmond Smith, while riding just behind the last of a body of cavalry, discovered by the roadside a horse *minus* one foot, which had been blown off by a torpedo buried in the road bed. It seems that four torpedoes had been placed in a line crosswise of the road. The two center ones had exploded. A colonel on General Blair's staff and the adjutant of the First Alabama cavalry rode up and began searching for others by pushing loose dirt from the top. The colonel uncovered one, but the adjutant not finding any so close to the surface as was that just found, supposed there was none and began treading about carelessly, when suddenly the last one exploded. Operator Smith was within eight feet of the adjutant at the time and the colonel even nearer, but both escaped unhurt, though somewhat demoralized. No wonder, for the adjutant lay bleeding and in intense pain. A piece of the exploded shell had carried one foot entirely away. It entered the heel and came out at the knee. General Sherman soon came up and set rebel prisoners at work digging for shells.

Matters began to look less like a picnic. The enemy were being crowded to where they had to shoot. This was December 8. The last time that day the enemy opened their guns on the Unionists, Smith was riding with General Blair and staff. The Confederates getting the range, a solid shot fired at the crowd, passed within two feet of General Blair's head and striking a shoulder of the Quarter-master of the first Division of Blair's corps, it came out under the opposite arm. He was dead at once.

The army pressed forward, mainly bending to the right, toward Ossabaw Sound. Slocum's corps pushed up against the city. Howard went to King's Bridge, about fourteen miles south-west of Savannah with a division and his engineers. Near there a little fight took place. While it was going on, Lonergan tapped the "Gulf" line at Miller's Station, in full view of the

rebel line of battle. Howard was present with his operator, but they did not stay long. A battalion from Augusta nearly captured the General and his party. The timely arrival of the Seventh Illinois mounted infantry, alone prevented it. The wire toward Savannah had been destroyed by Sherman's troops, but it was O K the other way.

Richmond Smith's diary will sufficiently explain the further operations resulting in the fall of Savannah.

DECEMBER 13.

General Sherman has been *very anxious to establish a base of operations*. From the day we first established our lines in front of Savannah, our right has been gradually extended and pushed in toward Ossabaw Sound, until it rested upon a point three miles distant from Fort McAllister. Last evening, General Sherman disappeared from head-quarters, and it was soon ascertained that he had gone with General Hazen and his (the Second) Division of the Fifteenth Corps, as far as King's bridge, the only point where the Ogeechee could be crossed, and went into camp that night. He made his appearance, however, early the next morning, on his way to our extreme right. At that place there is a large rice mill on the plantation of Doctor Cheeve, from which Fort McAllister could be plainly seen. Hearing about what was going on, I hurried to the mills, twenty-one miles distant from head-quarters. I reached there just in time. With the use of a field glass, I could see the fort, rebel flag, and even the men, very distinctly. Affairs were evidently drawing to a focus rapidly, as the General was beginning to get somewhat excited. Our skirmishers were getting so close to the fort that they could do little or no service at firing on the enemy. All at once the guns of the fort burst forth with a fearful fire of grape and canister. Our boys shot out of the woods towards the fort over the *chevaux-de-frise*, and quickly mounted the parapets and poured volley after volley into the rebels. This was the moment the General looked for. We could no longer discern our boys, but the old flags, two of which were held upon the parapets by our boys, could be plainly seen, and we knew as long as they stood up so proudly, all was well. Volley after volley continued to be showered unmercifully upon the rebels, still they did not surrender; nor did they until every gun was taken from them. They were evidently among the best men the South could boast of. Their manner, habits and language spoke much in their favor. The first evidence that the

fight had ended was our flag waving to and fro on the parapets a sign evidently agreed on by the generals. General Sherman was almost beside himself. The importance of the victory at this point can only be estimated when I say that some of our boys were so short of rations that they offered a dollar apiece for hard crackers, and in many cases they could not be obtained at any price.

This was the key to the river, and in fact the only obstruction to our communication with the fleet. We could not have formed a base at any other point, short of four or five days ; hence the value of the victory at this point and at this time could not be overestimated. The Signal Corps here did good service. Just as the capture of the fort had been effected, a vessel hove in sight, but so far off that it could barely be seen ; but as they gradually neared us, they perceived our signal officers calling them, which they answered by asking who was at that station. We replied: "General Sherman." A message was then addressed to General Sherman, asking what they could do for him, signed J. G. Foster and Commodore Dahlgren. The General replied that General Hazen had just assaulted and carried Fort McAllister, and wished them to go to their assistance. This, however, they could not do, as the river was supposed to be full of torpedoes, as well as having obstructions in the shape of a row of piles across it. The fort was manned by about two hundred men, having seventeen guns in position, nine of which were heavy siege guns, and eight field pieces.

Our loss, including those killed and wounded by torpedoes, I learn, does not exceed ninety ; that of the rebels, twenty killed and the usual proportion wounded.

Operator Lonergan, who was also at Cheeve's Mill, says that General Sherman was at that time loud in his praise of the Signal Corps and electric telegraphs, but thought they should be united.

The day after the assault, Captain John Hays of Kilpatrick's staff, got permission to take ten men and cross the Ogeechee. On Hays' invitation operator Drake went also. They rode south-east to Sunbury, at the head of St. Catherine's Sound. While there they caught a negro, who told them that a company of Confederate foragers was at a church ten miles distant. Hays and Griffith, the latter Kilpatrick's big dare-devil scout, were much elated at the prospect of a scrimmage. All started and found and captured twice their force and five wagons loaded

with hams and bacon. The rebels were kept in the church until morning, when Hays and Griffith purposely within hearing of the prisoners, began an argument as to their disposition. Griffith, talking only for effect on the Confederates, insisted upon killing them, urging that there was not enough to eat in camp —which was true. Hays was for more merciful action. The decision was reserved, while Drake, of course unknown to the prisoners, drafted a parole broad enough to take in the whole squad at once. It read something like this: "We each and all, and each for the other do hereby sincerely promise and solemnly swear that we will not take up arms against the United States, nor give aid and comfort to any of its enemies, until regularly exchanged. So help us, God."—"N. B. The penalty for a violation of this, is death." Hays and Griffith who had withdrawn, now approached the church with Drake. The poor fellows inside looked all that they feared. It was a sorry joke, but Hays told them the decision to parole. It was joyful news indeed. Drake stepped inside and laid the writing on the table for signatures. The first man that came forward, stopped short before Drake and ejaculated, "The devil and Tom Walker!" Then Drake looked the man squarely in the face and exclaimed, "The devil and Tom Walker!" Each recognized the other. The rebel was the lieutenant in the First Georgia cavalry in General Wheeler's command, whom Drake, as we have seen, had captured in 1862 near Boston, close by Lebanon Junction, in Kentucky, while General Bragg was in that State. They shook hands and then took something.

Sherman's operations were now within the Department of the South, in which Captain James R. Gilmore was chief of the Federal telegraphs. Wherefore Smith, Drake, Murray and Waterhouse by Sherman's consent, December 19, left for the North. Drake had obtained from the soldier who stole it, rebel Colonel McAllister's copy of "Hogarth," and was taking it home with him. Out on Ossabaw Sound Murray got seasick and spoiled "Hogarth." It was quite difficult for Drake to leave Kilpatrick's, where he was placed on the pay rolls at one hundred and fifty dollars per month as copyist, notwithstanding Captain VanDuzer was paying him fully another hundred as operator, but there was in the North a nice pair of blue eyes,

which he afterwards married. His heart was not set on money —and in the end it was all for the best, for those eyes tenderly watched his welfare for fifteen years, and then day and night as he slowly but peacefully sunk into a consumptive's grave.

On the night of the twentieth, General Hardee, going by the only open road, that leading into South Carolina, evacuated Savannah, which was occupied in the morning by the Federals.

On the tenth, Captain Gilmore reported to General Sherman for orders, and in a day or two had line material in abundance at King's Bridge. His work was speedily begun and when finished, his line connected Savannah with Hazen's head-quarters near Fort McAllister; with Kilpatrick's on the Ogeechee road; Fort Pulaski on Cockspur Island at the mouth of the Savannah River, which since June, 1863 was in telegraphic communication with Beaufort, on Port Royal Island. A line was also, by order of General Foster, commanding the Department of the South, built from Devereaux Neck to the head-quarters of Brigadier General Hatch, commanding provost brigade, to facilitate operations against the enemy at Pocotaligo, S. C.; and on its occupation, that place was put in communication by telegraph with Port Royal Ferry. "The building and operation of these lines," Gilmore reported, "in this Department, extending as they do, through swamp and river, was attended with almost insurmountable difficulties and the work was greatly retarded by the troops, who frequently destroyed the line for miles, using the poles for firewood, doubtless in the belief that these were rebel wires. Captains Gilmore, of the Telegraph Corps, and Churchill, United States Navy, superintended the removal of wrecks and other obstructions in the Savannah River, thus enabling vessels to approach the city.

Savannah was gained; the "shell" broken. Thomas' success in Tennessee made Sherman's doubly glorious. That great soldier, in his "Memoirs," says: "I wrote on a slip of paper, to be left at the telegraph office at Fortress Monroe for transmission, the following:"

SAVANNAH, GA., December 22, 1864

TO HIS EXCELLENCY, PRESIDENT LINCOLN,
Washington, D. C.:

I beg to present you, as a Christmas gift, the city of Savannah,

with one hundred and fifty heavy guns and plenty of ammunition; also about twenty-five thousand bales of cotton.

W. T. SHERMAN, *Major General*

"This message actually reached the President on Christmas eve, was extensively published in newspapers, and made many a household happy on that festive day."

CHAPTER XVI.

THE TELEGRAPH IN THE SIEGE OF PETERSBURG.—THE MINE EXPLOSION.—OPERATORS COURT-MARTIALED; NOT GUILTY.—DANGERS OF THE SERVICE.—ADVANCES TOWARD RICHMOND CHECKED.—NARROW ESCAPE AT REAMS STATION.—A MILITARY RAILROAD.—GRANT'S WIRES TAPPED; IMPORTANT RESULTS.—HATCHER'S RUN FIGHT.—WEST VIRGINIA AFFAIRS.—NUMEROUS TELEGRAPHIC INCIDENTS.—THE REBELS OUT-WITTED.—SHENANDOAH OPERATIONS UNDER SHERIDAN.—A GREAT VICTORY.—OPERATOR McCRICKETT AND OTHERS KILLED.—OPERATIONS IN NORTH CAROLINA.—FORT FISHER.—SHERMAN'S ADVANCE FROM SAVANNAH.—INCIDENTS OF THE MARCH.—SHERMAN AT GOLDSBORO.

Petersburg, a city of about twenty thousand citizens, is situated on the Appomattox, at the head of sloop navigation. It lies twenty-two miles south of Richmond, and there, in 1864, centered various important railroads, wagon ways and telegraphs. When Meade's army began its *semi*-siege—for the city was never completely invested—the Confederates held the Weldon, Lynchburg, and Richmond railroads. The forces under Grant, viz., Butler's and Meade's hereabouts, on the 1st of July, 1864, held a semicircular line from the Weldon Railroad, about Reams Station, to Deep Bottom.

Lieutenant Colonel Pleasants having completed a tunnel and lateral branches running under the rebel works in front of Cemetery Hill, mounting sixteen guns, for the purpose of exploding large quantities of powder and thereby making a breach through which it was hoped Burnside might push his corps of fifteen thousand men, and thus enter the city and divide Lee's forces, it was arranged, mainly by telegraph, that the mine should be exploded and the assault made at 3:30, A. M., on the 30th of July. Anticipatory of this assault, movements of other

forces to the north of the James, countermarched by night to be returned again in open day, had succeeded splendidly in inducing Lee to move all of his troops, except three divisions, also north of that river, which being effected, most of the Union troops were again moved by night to the support of the assaulting corps. Thus far the excellent plans had been admirably executed. Burnside advanced his head-quarters temporarily to Battery 14, and the field telegraph was continued thereto from his regular quarters. Operators accompanied Burnside to this new scene of danger, and thus every corps commander, of either army and Grant, Meade and Butler were brought within speaking distance of each other. General Meade made his head-quarters, as announced in the order of battle on the day previous, at the permanent quarters of the Ninth (Burnside's) Corps, and was accompanied by General Grant. General Meade subsequently testified that he adopted this position in consequence of its being a central one, and in telegraphic communication with all parts of the line where officers were stationed, with whom it was necessary to communicate.

Owing to the use of fuse which proved defective, instead of electricity, which should have been employed, the eight thousand pounds of powder placed in the mine could not be exploded until 4:46 A. M., when great masses of material, earth, timbers, cannon, soldiers and caissons were hurled near two hundred feet high as in one body, shaped like an inverted cone, through seams of which rushed the seething smoke and gases, whose pressure held or seemed to hold this confused mass, poised on high for an instant, when it fell with a great noise. Instantly one hundred and sixty Union cannon and mortars opened fire upon the enemy. The three South Carolina regiments stationed about the mined works were either buried in the ruins or suddenly awakened, to be frightened into uselessness. By five o'clock the first line about the crater was occupied by the assaulting party, which it is generally believed might then have taken Cemetery Hill and insured complete success, but instead of advancing as they ought, the troops huddled together in the crater in inextricable confusion ending about ten A. M., in an order of withdrawal and a loss, killed, wounded and missing of four thousand, four hundred men. During the progress of this

assault, Meade had frequent occasion to telegraph to the various head-quarters' offices, and if he was not so fully advised of operations on Burnside's front as he should have been, it was not for lack of telegraphic facilities, nor has anyone so intimated. Between the hours of five and ten o'clock, "I received and transmitted," said General Meade, "over one hundred despatches and orders, averaging one every three minutes." "The vast number of despatches and the frequency with which they were sent and received," is another form of expression adopted by General Meade subsequently, to explain why his memory might not recall the exact order of incidents occurring during the assault.

Meade was disappointed at what he regarded as Burnside's misconduct, and after Grant returned to City Point it was the subject of telegraphic correspondence between the Lieutenant General and Meade. Burnside obtained somehow information of the character of this correspondence, greatly to Meade's displeasure. Meade accused Burnside's operators, Jerry Flynn and Charles K. Hambright, with the disclosure, and caused their arrest and confinement with other prisoners, in a guard house called the "bull pen," near his head-quarters, but they were allowed under guard to eat with Meade's operators. They were tried by a court martial convened at head-quarters of the Army of the Potomac, and defended by Major VanBuren of Burnside's staff. Burnside himself appearing as a witness. The judgment of the court was, "not guilty," but Meade, nevertheless ordered Flynn and Hambright sent beyond the lines of the army, which was done. Number one operators were in great demand, and it is said that upon one occasion subsequently when Meade applied to Major Eckert for more operators, he was informed that Flynn and Hambright were his only available ones, wherefore they were returned to service with that army.

In the month of July, the Second (Hancock's), Ninth (Burnside's) and Fifth (Warren's) Army Corps of the Army of the Potomac and the Eighteenth, of the Army of the James, were moved so often in the vigorous attempts of Grant to make headway against the enemy, that they can scarce be said to have had any particular camping ground, but wherever they were, they were in telegraphic communication with each other. At Meade's

head-quarters, were operators Caldwell, Emerick and Pierce. At Warren's in the Avery House, Edwards and E. A. Hall until the latter part of the month, when the former, from severe exposures more dead than alive, went home it was generally believed, to die, but thanks to his constitution and nursing he recovered. His friend Dealy, operating at Fort Monroe, met him shivering on the hurricane deck of the steamer John Brooks and administering warm comfort internally and externally, started him again for home where he recovered in the fall, when he was offered by Major Eckert, the position of chief operator in the Army of the Potomac. But owing to sickness in his mother's family, he was unable to accept, and thus the Telegraph Corps lost one of its ablest and most heroic servitors. At Hancock's in the "deserted house," were operators Rose and Shreffler, except during the thirtieth, when Burnside's mine was exploded, at which time they were at Battery 14, where the noise of the conflict was so great that the instrument could be heard only by placing the ear close to it. At Burnside's were Charles K. Hambright and Jeremiah Flynn; at the Eighteenth (Smith's, afterwards Ord's), David E. Rand and J. E. Bliss; but the latter was relieved late in the month by Charles Douglass. The Tenth Corps stationed along the James about Jones' Neck and Bermuda Hundred, was in line of several offices, one at Jones' Neck, where W. S. Logue and O. B. Vincent operated; another at Bermuda Hundred, W. H. Wilson, operator; another at General Brooks' Head-quarters, Bermuda Hundred Front, W. K. Applebaugh; and another at Point of Rocks, a pontoon station across the Appomattox, where Maynard A. Huyck was stationed part of the time. At Butler's head-quarters, Bermuda Hundred, were Richard O'Brien, J. H. Nichols and Maynard Huyck; at General Grant's, City Point, C. H. Beckwith, cipher operator, J. D. Tinney, manager and F. T. Bickford and George Henderson, assistants.

Telegrams for the North from these points were relayed at City Point, which was in direct communication with Washington *via* Fort Powhatan, Jamestown Island, Yorktown, Fort Monroe, Cherrystone and Wilmington. L. M. Painter operated at Fort Powhatan until relieved in August by T. Q. Waterhouse. W. N. Embree at Jamestown Island until relieved in August by T.

N. Loucks. At Fort Monroe, were George D. Sheldon, C. L. Snyder, W. J. Dealy, C. A. Homan and S. C. Burns. This line, from Swan's Point, opposite Jamestown Island *via* Surrey Court House, was frequently interrupted by guerrillas, and as a sufficient force could not be spared permanently for its protection, a cable was laid in July from the Island to Fort Powhatan, twenty-two miles, which, with but few interruptions occasioned by anchors, worked successfully to the end of the war. The total number of miles of cable between Washington and City Point was fifty-two. A repair boat was arranged to raise and underrun the cable whenever it proved defective. The land line between Swan's Point and Fort Powhatan was maintained as well as practicable to mislead the enemy, who were content with cutting that.

Some incidents connected with the siege of Petersburg will best illustrate the uncertain tenure of life which the operators hereabouts held. Rand and Douglass were stationed a mile and a half from Petersburg and within plain view of the town clock, from which they regularly obtained the time of day. Headquarters here were in plain view of the enemy, and received a large share of his attention. A member of the Seventy-ninth New York, the Highlanders, whose service had nearly expired, was acting as orderly or messenger at this office, and had a presentiment that he should never see home again. While sitting with his back to the enemy engaged in checkers on a hardtack box marked out for the purpose, and within ten feet of the telegraph tent, he was struck in the middle of the back by a bullet which caused him such intense pain that three men were required to hold him. He died several days after. An operator's horse was tied to a picket rope about twenty feet from the tent. A shell struck the ground near by, richochetted and killed that and another horse. The operators inside declared that they could hear the breaking of the bones. A soldier guarding commissary stores, was sitting on a vinegar barrel, when it was pierced by a solid shot passing between his legs. This was usually referred to as the time the rebels drew vinegar from the Eighteenth Corps head-quarters. Shortly after Ord took command, the quarters were moved further back.

At Hancock's office, affairs were not much better. Late in

June, as the Second Corps was straightening and advancing its line, the enemy broke Gibbon's division line, and made some captures, which were duly reciprocated. During the fight, head-quarters camp received a number of shells, causing a general scattering and a removal of the camp. The telegraph operators, however, remained until all had gone, when they were ordered to leave also. An operator at Meade's head-quarters, speaking of the dangers incident to the telegraphers with Hancock, probably in the "deserted house," says "They were located in a house near the front, which was shelled day after day, some of the shells actually passing through the house."

In front of Burnside's corps, was a thirty-two pounder, which sent its missiles into the city every five minutes, with such regularity that it became known as the "Petersburg Express." The enemy, greatly annoyed, used to return the compliment, frequently overshooting, much to the disturbance of Flynn and Hambright.

The Confederates amused themselves often at night, attempting to shell Meade's head-quarters, but never got the exact range. Mortar shells, however, frequently fell very near, and quite disturbed the operators' sleep. A stray "Whitworth" shot dropped into their neighbors' tent one morning, while the telegraphers were eating breakfast.

August 9, from some unknown cause an ordnance boat at the City Point wharf exploded, destroying it and another boat, overturning buildings and scattering shells, shot, bullets, timbers, human limbs, etc., about the bluffs. Grant's head-quarters camp received a shower of all conceivable missiles, besides pieces of a pilot house and smoke stacks. Over sixty persons were killed, and one hundred and thirty wounded. Operator Beckwith's bed-clothing was set on fire by a shell, while he sat on the opposite side of his tent uninjured.

A little later, operator Laverty took his horse down a ravine near Fifth Corps head-quarters, where H. W. Cowan and another operated, to give it some water. While the animal was drinking out of the barrel set in a spring, a shell fell a few yards in front and immediately exploded, killing the horse and knocking the operator off. A piece of the shell made a large wound across his forehead, knocking one eye nearly out of its socket.

On the 13th of August, new movements were initiated with the triple purpose of preventing Lee from sending reinforcements to Early in the Shenandoah Valley, and threatening Richmond on the south and Petersburg around the rebel right. Butler laid a pontoon across the James at Big Bottom, and W. H. Wilson opened an office on the north bank at General Foster's headquarters. The Second Corps debarked there, and for several days it and the Tenth Corps engaged the enemy along Bailey's Creek near by, Wilson at the time being at Hancock's headquarters, which were in telegraphic communication with Grant and Butler. These forces being unable to break the enemy's lines, were ordered to recross the river during the night of the twentieth. General Hancock instructed his operator Wilson to open an office at the pontoon bridge; so mounting his horse he made post haste and reopened Deep Bottom office at eight o'clock P. M., when it was dark and raining hard. His office consisted of an empty cracker box standing on one side. His instrument and paper were placed inside, and to use either he had to lie flat on a blanket spread upon the ground and reach inside the box to copy or operate. His ground wire was inserted in a hole made with his pocket knife. It was thus, that General Grant was kept advised for several hours of the movements of the forces north of the James.

On the left, meanwhile Warren's corps, succeeded in striking the Weldon railroad, which, owing to the destruction on the South Side and Danville roads by Wilson and Kautz not yet wholly restored, was considered by Lee as nearly vital to his position; hence he made many and desperate efforts to regain the route. The last one resulted in the battle of Reams Station, to the left of Warren, on the 25th of August, when Hancock's corps was severely handled, losing altogether twenty-one hundred and fifty-three men. His telegraph office on this occasion, worked by Rose and Shreffler, was in Mr. Spier's house near the railroad. The fighting was continued until after dark; Hancock's men falling back, in the main, steadily and fighting and resisting every foot. There was disorder in parts of the line, owing to the fact that many of the troops were new recruits. The telegraphers being to the right of the fight, were protected merely by a picket line, which was withdrawn rapidly without

the operators' knowledge. Their messenger was in search of Hancock with important despatches. In this condition of affairs a member of Meade's staff with escort and drawn revolver rode up and demanded who was there. He said, on ascertaining, that the operators were cut off and must not stop a minute, but take to the woods for the rear. At that moment the orderly returned and reported that Hancock's corps was in retreat, but he thought he could pilot the operators out in safety. A severe thunder-storm deluged the ground as the three, passing near the rebels, succeeded in escaping through cornfields and woods, and after wandering until 1:30 A. M., they reached Jones' house and found the General and staff—except Captain Brownson, mortally wounded while rallying the men, and Lieutenant Colonel Walker, captured while trying to find General Miles. During all of these operations Hancock, Warren and Ord, Meade and Grant, and probably several division commanders, had frequent occasion to use the telegraph, the local lines of which must have been fully forty miles in extent.

Grant's forces had already extended so far to the left that a military railroad, deemed necessary, was built, connecting with the City Point railroad about six miles from that place and running around to Meade's Station near the center front, and thence to Warren's, Hancock's and Patrick's Stations, striking the Weldon railroad a little north of Reams. This line from City Point was superintended by George Huntington, an ex-operator from New York State, A. G. Safford operated for a time at City Point depot, R. C. Laverty at Meade's, R. D. Williams at Patrick's, John F. Sabine at Hancock's and V. H. Wells at Warren's Station.

It was at this time that the most successful wire tapping of the war (in point of time) was accomplished by Charles A. Gaston, one of General Lee's operators. Lee had been exhausting his resources to ascertain the purposes of Grant, when the idea of tapping the Fort Monroe line was suggested. An independent company of men known as Reide's Scouts was directed to assist Gaston, who was chosen for the hazardous undertaking of connecting his instrument to the line in the vicinity of Doctor Richards', near Surray Court House. Gaston was conducted to the locality I believe by a few men under General Roger A.

Pryor, and left with the scouts, who for the most part were, so far as appeared, peaceable citizens engaged in chopping wood *i. e.* when they were in danger of discovery, but a careful watch was kept that they might not be discovered at all. Gaston, before leaving Richmond caused an insulator to be prepared so as to hold the two ends of the main line in place on the pole so as not to attract attention. To these he connected his fine silk covered wire and running that under the bark to the bottom it was extended a considerable distance along the ground into the adjoining woods and well covered with dry leaves. Thus Gaston opened his office on the military line connecting City Point with the War Department. His office, none the best, was as good as the woods afforded. Two men were on guard along the edge of the woods all the time. If seen they made the best of it, being careful not to appear unwilling to meet the discoverers, thus very little attention was paid them. It was arranged that when there was special need of caution or preparation for the Federals the guards along the roadway where the line ran should make a shrill whistle, which was repeated by another watch nearer and so on to the main camp. Thus for *six whole weeks* the Confederate operator was on Grant's wire. While that indicates what a brave operator may accomplish under perilous circumstances, the fact that but one message received by Gaston during all of that time proved of any value to the Confederates, reflects infinite credit upon the Corps for its telegraph cipher system. Gaston copied a great many cryptographic despatches which were sent to Richmond but *were never translated.*

The one message however that the enemy did profit by proved of incalculable value. That one not being marked "cipher" was sent plain about the 12th of September. It was from the Quartermaster in Washington and requested a guard, to meet twenty-four hundred and eighty-six cattle at Coggins Point, where they would be landed, and convoy them to City Point. At that time Lee's commissariat was struggling with the question of food. Meat was especially needed and difficult to obtain. This message pointed out a new way. Accordingly Wade Hampton on the fifteenth with a large body of cavalry left the vicinity of Reams Station, and making quite a detour arrived at Coggins Point the next day in time to receive the

cattle and convoy them *to the Confederate* army, which they supplied for about forty days. He also captured three hundred prisoners, two hundred mules, thirty-two wagons and forty telegraph builders.

When a new party of builders reached the vicinity of Surray, Gaston knew his wires would be discovered and accordingly he destroyed as much of the telegraph as possible and returned to Lee.

Again the word came for a forward march. October 1, Generals Warren and Parke, the latter having succeeded Burnside in command of the Ninth Corps, with four divisions and cavalry pushed westward to the Squirrel Level Road, adding so much to Meade's permanent lines, but losing twenty-five hundred men.

The Tenth Corps under Birney and the Eighteenth, had already advanced north of the James by the Newmarket and Varina roads respectively; Kautz' cavalry preceding also on the right. Fort Harrison on the Varina road was captured and held in spite of gallant assaults to retake it. David E. Rand opened an office at General Birney's head-quarters and after the capture of Fort Harrison was relieved by W. K. Applebaugh whose office was in a small log house about six miles from Richmond, where he maintained communication with City Point until the evacuation of the Confederate capital. Rand opened an office at Jones' Landing near Dutch Gap, assisted by C. D. Hammond.

General Grant on the 27th of October, causing Butler to demonstrate on his front, sent Hancock's corps to the extreme left to the neighborhood of the Boydtown crossing of Hatcher's Run. Rose and S. K. Rupley accompanied Hancock, starting on the twenty-sixth and again at three A. M. of the twenty-seventh, and by eleven o'clock attempted to tap the rebel line on the Boydtown road, but found no circuit. The field telegraph for some reason was not built with this advance, and Rose and Rupley consequently, and owing to the proximity of the enemy, found it extremely difficult to locate themselves. A shell burst over their heads dispersing the cavalry advance, to the woods. The operators took to the rear and left, when a shell passed just over them from the *rear;* they were between two fires. Next,

they joined Hancock. Grant and Meade with their staffs soon came up. So many horsemen in the open field drew the enemy's fire, and in the general scatter the operators went to an improvised hospital where they attempted to rest. But about three o'clock the enemy charged and turned Hancock's right. The stragglers in large numbers and an ambulance train came rushing by; the operators hurried to the open field to discover the cause and saw the enemy's successful advance, which however Hancock soon turned, to their great discomfiture. As that was not an insurable risk, the operators galloped to the extreme left, but there an attack upon the cavalry was made by Hampton which caused much confusion. Again the telegraphers started for a safe place, several shells hurrying them on. They were turned back from their new direction by a party who told them it was foolish to go that way, so they took the only road open to the rear which was found filled with pack-mules, stragglers, non-combatants, ambulances and wounded men. It grew very dark and rained hard; the operators got lost in the woods, lay down and slept in the pelting rain and dreamt of home, sweet home. At 1:30 A. M. they joined the retiring corps and in due time were again telegraphing at the "deserted house." The Union losses in this affair were killed, wounded and missing twelve hundred and eighty-four, but their captures exceeded that number. It was the last important advance Grant made during the year against the enemy in Meade's or Butler's front.

Many new operators joined these armies between July and January. Their names are William H. Woodring, Joseph L. Sears, Charles H. Mixer and John W. Gregg loaned to Major Eckert by Captain Clowry of the Missouri Department for six weeks, and Charles D. Hammond, George Warren, George F. Durant, Edward W. Mason, John F. Sabine, R. A. Shutt, James N. Allen, F. W. Davis, James Caldwell, Ed. Schermerhorn, John D. Thurston, James A. Glazier, S. C. Holbrook, F. C. Long, Edward W. McKenna, and M. S. Andrews. James A. Murray, D. C. Aughenbaugh, Thomas Morrison, T. N. Loucks, W. C. Barron, T. Q. Waterhouse, P. H. Nunan and John A. Sheridan were brought here from other parts of the department. These men were busily employed, as the practice con-

tinued throughout the war, of having all important offices open night and day.

It is now in order to relate the operations in West Virginia and the Valley of Virginia. The Confederates before this had seemingly resolved that there was nothing in the mountainous region of West Virginia justifying them in putting forth strong efforts to re-capture it, but were content to watch Federal operations with guerrilla bands and an occasional raid in force. Consequently the Union side was held by small detachments variously stationed along the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad, along the Kanawha to Fayetteville and out from Clarksburg to Beverly and Bulltown. On these routes the telegraph, under the general management of Captain Lynch, and the immediate charge of Charles O. Rowe, chief operator, was maintained by a brave and lonesome corps of operators and repairers.

On the 26th of September, 1864, the military telegraph office at Weston, on the Bulltown line, was taken possession of by Confederates under Colonel Witcher. R. D. E. Rowe, the operator there escaped by jumping out of a second story window and running to the woods while the enemy were firing on him. Witcher had with him a telegraph operator who, pretending to be the regular Union telegraphist at that post, transmitted in the name of the captured commandant there, a message to the commander at Clarksburg, stating that three thousand rebels under General Basil Duke were advancing on Weston by the Parkersburg pike and asking how many troops were at Clarksburg, and how many could be sent to Weston. Charles J. Thomas, M. B. Graham, Daniel Colestock and George K. Smith were operating at Clarksburg at the time, and the one of them who chanced to answer the call became satisfied from the peculiarity of the telegraphic manipulations at Weston, that the telegram was written by the enemy and transmitted by a stranger, consequently he informed Colonel Wilkinson, commanding at Clarksburg, of his conviction, but wisely O Ked the message when sent, without indicating to the rebel operator his suspicions. Wilkinson promptly replied, stating that two thousand troops had just arrived by rail and that more were expected during the night. It subsequently became known that Colonel Witcher's command

nine hundred strong, after plundering Weston, retreated southeasterly, striking the Beverly line at Buckhannon, although his original intention was to capture Clarksburg and destroy the large amount of Government property at that depot, which he could have very easily accomplished, as there were but two companies of troops at Clarksburg at that time. This is a clear case of being beaten at their own game, but it is only one of the many bloodless victories won by the telegraph and heralded by nobody. If the place had been saved after great sacrifices in battle, some one would have been promoted.

On the morning of October 29, an infantry force three hundred strong, under Captain Hill, was repulsed at Beverly. After they retreated Philip Reger, the military telegraph repairer, stationed there, having a thorough knowledge of the country, piloted the pursuing Union forces over a shorter route—a by path—so that they were enabled to charge the advance of the retreating enemy who were driven across a creek with a loss of ninety-three prisoners, besides whom, the Federals re-captured forty of their own men taken at Beverly. Shortly before, Witcher captured Buckhannon (September 27, 1864), when C. D. Tull, operator there, escaped, this same repairer started for that place to mend the line. After riding a few miles he came within sight of a body of Witcher's men and immediately turning back was pursued by the cavalry. Reger dismounted and took to the woods. While running through them, he felt something strike his boot-leg, and looking down found he was dragging a large rattle-snake whose fangs had become fastened in the leg of his boot. Of course he dispatched the reptile whose fourteen rattles he brought to Clarksburg.

The next January, J. Jolls operating at Beverly was secreted by friends while the enemy held possession of the town.

About 11 A. M., November 28, rebels in the uniform of Federal soldiers, under General Rosser, surprised the Union force at New Creek, Va., and took possession of the place. Rosser had with him a considerable force of cavalry. The military telegraph office was seized before the operator, W H. H. Lancaster, could escape. After being robbed of his valuables and clothing, he was compelled to march barefoot to Harrisonburg, with nothing to eat until the third day of his captivity, when he

was given three-quarters of a pound of fresh beef, which was all he had until the evening of the fifth day. He was confined in Castle Thunder, Richmond, where he kept from freezing by using half of the blanket of a kind comrade in misfortune. He was released in about four months.

The telegraph line from Weston to Bulltown ran through a very rough country, thickly wooded, and hence the wire was mainly strung from tree to tree. The circuit was frequently interrupted by bushwhackers and others. William K. Smith, formerly a member of the Seventh Michigan Volunteers, who had seen much service under McClellan, was wounded at Antietam, discharged in consequence, re-enlisted in an Ohio regiment, was detailed in the fall of 1864, and sent to Bulltown to operate. While there he discovered that the wire was frequently tampered with at a certain point in the woods on the Weston road, which determined him to investigate the cause. Arriving one night near the location where the line followed a rough and rugged hillside, at the base of which meandered a small stream, he led his horse to a dense thicket and tied it. He then walked to the roadside and by the aid of climbers took position in a high tree from which he could view the line on either side for some distance. He had not long to wait when three armed men rode up almost beneath his retreat. It was there arranged, that one of the party should ride some distance ahead and another as far behind to watch, while the third cut the wire. The third man rode up the steep bank underneath the wire which sagged at that point. The two guards having taken their positions, the other, standing on the back of his horse, attempted to sever the line with some kind of instrument, when Smith, whose revolver had been cocked all the while, took deliberate aim at the bushwhacker and fired. The bullet missed the man and shivered a glass insulator which had become detached from a tree and hung by a wire. The sudden report of the revolver and breaking glass startled the horse into a run, throwing the rider who rolled down the bank toward the road, but getting upon his feet as quickly as possible, he ran off rapidly. Nothing was seen afterward of any of the three men, thereabouts, and the line was seldom thereafter molested in that neighborhood.

In the Shenandoah Valley there was earnest war. Sheridan

was by nature thoroughly aggressive. His force, the Sixth and Nineteenth Corps and Crook's cavalry, equalled his enemy's under Early and Anderson—about twenty-two thousand men. The War Department had for some time telegraphed official bulletins for the information of the people, who had been deceived so greatly theretofore by unscrupulous brokers anxious to affect market values, and incautious correspondents, who were too apt to transmit mere rumors (which were always floating) as ascertained facts. The bulletin, of September 10, contained Sheridan's despatch to Grant, which was put in cipher at head-quarters by operator McCaine, in Rachel Wright's house, Winchester, September 19, at eight, P. M. The most important part, translated, read as follows:

I have the honor to report that I attacked the forces of General Early, on the Berryville Pike, at the crossing of Oquoquan Creek, and after a most stubborn and sanguinary engagement, which lasted from early in the morning until five o'clock, completely defeated him, capturing about two thousand prisoners, five pieces of artillery, nine army flags and most of their wounded.

Three days later, Early was again routed at Fisher's Hill.

October 9, the Confederate cavalry was most effectually beaten near Strasburg. Notwithstanding these defeats, Early, heavily reinforced, took advantage of Sheridan's absence and routed his army; but on his way to join the command, Sheridan heard of the disaster, which, by his rapid ride, celebrated in verse, he turned into a decided Union victory at Cedar Creek before night. In short, from September 1, to January, 1865, Sheridan's forces captured one hundred and one pieces of artillery, thirteen thousand prisoners and disabled nine thousand Confederates, besides destroying millions of dollars worth of property in the Valley, which could have been turned directly or indirectly to the advantage of the Southerners. Thus — save an encounter in the following spring, with a small force under Early —ended the war in the Valley.

The telegraph lines frequently connected with Sheridan's head-quarters, and he was almost always within a short ride of the wire when he had no office with him. Grant and the country were thus kept advised of operations in this vicinity.

While Sheridan was operating so near Front Royal early in October, the authorities at Washington deemed it prudent to reopen the Manassas Gap Railroad and rebuild the telegraph to Front Royal, having in view the supplying ot his army by that route, and his retreat on Washington in case of defeat. So long had this road from Manassas Junction been unused, that it was overgrown by tall weeds and grass, completely hiding the rails. A large construction party, accompanied by Richard Power, a telegrapher of much experience and great usefulness, then and until after the war closed a despatcher of trains at Alexandria, started from Alexandria early one morning, escorted by eighty soldiers under Colonel Gallupe, to restore the road and wire. Advancing slowly, McIntosh of the Telegraph Corps constructed the line while the railroaders were rebuilding the bridges and repairing the track. The party worked their way through Thoroughfare Gap, reaching the south end of it at Broad Run late one evening, and halted. Power then opened an office on a barrel head, and reported progress to M. J. McCrickett, Superintendent at Alexandria of that and the Orange & Alexandria Railroad. McCrickett was a graduate of the telegraph, and richly deserved his new and responsible position. Next morning work was resumed, and, on nearly reaching White Plains, a couple of cannon balls flew through the air, screeching "Halt," and as one barely missed the bell of the locomotive, it was considered highly expedient to obey the warning voice. Colonel Gallupe and Power were on the engine at the time, and the officer remarked that the range was excellent for the first shot, but he thought he could dislodge the enemy; looking straight up the track, he discovered fully one hundred and fifty more on horse, whereupon, by direction of Gallupe, the train and construction party returned to Broad Run. Reinforcements were sent, to the number of two hundred infantry, to aid Gallupe, who meanwhile was not attacked—the enemy doubtless having counted the one hundred and fifty constructionists as part of the armed force. The enemy awaited and severely repulsed an attack, capturing sixty or seventy Union soldiers, but the position about the cars was held. Next morning the Confederates were gone. That afternoon, White Plains was reached and the guard largely strengthened. McCrickett and operator W. H. Glasscott came

with the reinforcements, stopping *en route* a few moments at Manassas Junction to give operator H. P. Bull some messages. Power returned to Alexandria. During the next day McCrickett, accompanied by Glasscott and Colonel Fuller of the Sixteenth Michigan Volunteers, went beyond White Plains, taking with them two engines, as one was unable to overcome the obstructions that had grown over the track. Edwin J. Bolt and G. W. Fuller, conductors, two engineers, and firemen Charles Brooks and Richard Cowig were the only other persons on the train. Proceeding slowly, about one and a half miles out, they were fired at from the woods, which caused the engineers to put on steam and the train to move rapidly to a steep embankment just ahead, where Kinchloe's guerrillas had drawn the spikes and fastened telegraph wire to the rails which were not displaced until the engines were near, when the scoundrels in the woods pulled on their end of the wire, displacing the rails and throwing the engines down the embankment. Immediately the bushwhackers opened a galling fire, and the wonder is that any escaped. McCrickett, Bolt, Fuller, Brooks and Cowig were killed; the former was horribly mangled and recognized only by his clothes. His remains were taken to Detroit for burial. McCrickett was about twenty-three years of age when murdered; of an unusually bright intellect; a splendid railroad officer and greatly admired by all with whom he came in contact. He left Detroit to join the United States Military Telegraph Corps, but being an accomplished railroader, the Government railroad officials first secured his services. The remainder of the party escaped, and doubtless made good time to White Plains. E. L. Wentz, chief engineer and general superintendent of military railroads in Virginia, in a special order dated October 11, 1864, justly said:

> The unfortunate victims of their latest atrocity were faithful and valuable public servants—men who, knowing the danger incident to their duty, fearlessly encountered it, and lost their lives in executing the trust reposed in them. Though not equipped with the implements of war, and sent upon the battle field where fame is won, they have none the less sacrificed their lives upon the sacred altar of our country, and deserve a place in our memories among the honored dead who have fallen in its defence.

Beside Power, McCrickett and Glasscott at Alexandria, O. H. Dorrence, G. M. Huntington, A. H. Holden and John Thomas and other graduates of this same office in Alexandria, deserve honorable mention for their splendid telegraphic service on the military railroads of Virginia.

The Government repaired the railroad from Harpers Ferry to Winchester; O. H. Dorrence was made superintendent of the branch from Harpers Ferry and Thomas King, another operator, was appointed train despatcher. These two men thus became largely responsible for feeding, clothing and equipment of Sheridan's army in the Valley.

Wilmington, N. C., now the remaining chief Confederate *entrépôt*, was next to fall and with it the series of coast defenses to give way, at most points, to a cordon of successful vessels of war and the legions of troops that under the stars and stripes were henceforth to maintain the defenses along the Atlantic and Gulf shores.

Admiral Porter and General Butler attempted the capture of Fort Fisher, on the north bank of Cape Fear River, that furnishes navigation to Wilmington. Butler's explosion of an immense quantity of powder in a vessel floated near one of the faces to the Fort, proved a complete failure, and his subsequent reconnoitering late in December, 1864, equally fruitless, but General Terry and Porter co-operating more cordially, succeeded in storming the works successfully. It was a gallant fight on both sides. The Union loss being one hundred and ten killed and five hundred and thirty-six wounded, to which should be added two hundred more killed and one hundred wounded the next day by an explosion of a magazine. Over two thousand prisoners, one hundred and sixty-nine cannon and much other property were captured.

Next month General Schofield arrived from the Department of the Cumberland with the Twenty-third Army Corps and took command; his force amounting to about twenty thousand men; with these he was able to take Wilmington and Kingston.

Richard O. Brien, chief operator with General Butler, and a party of telegraphers were sent with Schofield to take charge of the telegraphs in this new field. To assist in the op-

erations of the force advancing against Wilmington *via* Fort Fisher, a line was built from the fort up the peninsula towards the city, and immediately after its capture was extended into the city and an office opened February 23. The line from Morehead City *via* Newberne to Bachelor's Creek, built by J. R. Gilmore in the summer of 1863, was still intact. As Terry moved from Wilmington and Schofield from Newberne, the lines from those places were restored as these generals advanced on Goldsboro. General Sherman was already *en route* from Savannah, Ga., on his great march through the Carolinas, and Schofield was to co-operate from Newberne in the direction of Goldsboro, N. C. Let us now note the progress of Sherman's grand army of sixty thousand men newly equipped at Savannah, with everything that was needed to make it most potent in war. The end was approaching. The converging forces of Sherman, Schofield, Grant, Sheridan and even Thomas were threatening positive ruin to the Confederate cause.

February 1, 1865, Sherman's army was on its way from Savannah, Ga., for Goldsboro, N. C., *via* Midway, Columbia, S. C., and Fayetteville, N. C. Charles G. Eddy accompanied the General as cipher operator. Cass G. Sholes and John Lonergan were with O. O. Howard, who commanded the right wing of the army, and D. T. Berry was with General Slocum, commander of the left wing. Joseph Anderson went with Kilpatrick, who commanded the cavalry. All of these operators took with them pocket instruments and cipher keys, Eddy alone having a special key designed for communication with the War Department, Grant or Schofield. These operators also frequently performed duty as aides-de-camp to their respective Generals; their duties seeming to invite such commissions. Indeed it was quite usual for operators to serve in that capacity when occasion presented itself. At Rivers Bridge, Orangeburg, Cherew, Fayetteville and Bentonville, Lonergan was thus exposed to the enemy's fire. During the march he prepared in cipher a number of communications for the Union navy officers along the coast, giving information of the progress of Sherman's army; the resistance met and expectations for the future.

Negroes were hired with a promised reward of one hundred dollars in gold in case they successfully carried the messages, but it usually took more intelligent couriers to succeed, and hence Union soldiers were sent—disguised of course—when the matter was urgent. At midway, Lonergan tapped the line leading from Charleston, S. C., to Augusta, Ga., and Eddy chanced to be on the same mission four miles west at the same time. But Sherman's enterprising bummers, as his foragers had come to be called, were usually too far ahead to give the operators with the infantry much of a chance, for every time the bummers struck a line or a railroad they broke it, without awaiting orders.

Shortly after Sherman's army reached the Santee River, J. K. Witherspoon, about forty-five years old, operator at Camden, was aroused at two A. M. by a party from Beauregard with despatches for Hardee at Charleston, but as there was no night operator at Kingsville and no direct circuit to Charleston, Witherspoon bade them wait till daylight when he thought the Kingsville telegrapher would be on hand. And so he was, but the only telegraph route open from Kingsville that morning was *via* Florence to the north-east. After sending the messages, Witherspoon asked John F. Miller, the operator at Kingsville, where the Yankees were. Miller did not know, but thought near Gadsden depot, five miles above. In spite of the excellent advice he received, Miller insisted that Sherman could not catch him. When Witherspoon returned from breakfast, Miller had been captured and compelled to fire his own office and then march along.

The day before the soldiers entered Camden, some young men, claiming to belong to Wheeler's command opposing Sherman, came to the telegraph office, where they and the operator indulged in much buncomb regarding their splendid daring and insisted loudly that they only awaited the coming of the Union troops to enable them to demonstrate their bravery and skill. But when reports came that the army was scarce twenty miles away, the operator began to arrange for escaping. His wife however manifested the greatest zeal to assist. That night Witherspoon slept in the woods. Next day the militia captured a few bummers who laughed their captors in the face and said

Sherman's men would soon liberate them. The militia officer wanted Witherspoon to telegraph Sumter for reinforcements, which he tried to do, but soon returned to put his instrument in its hiding place. A number of muskets just then announced the dreaded foe and Witherspoon mounted his mule, which he whipped for miles and until certain woods were reached. As he passed his door, Mrs. Witherspoon stood with saddle in hand for him, but he had no time to put it on his animal, and so he went barebacked, developing his magnificent courage. The young men who had only waited an opportunity to exhibit their prowess were Yankee scouts whom the good citizens of Sumter feasted as Wheeler's troopers.

Lonergan while out early one morning with a cavalry escort, expected to outride the bummers and find the wire intact, but on nearing the railroad Lonergan's party was attacked by some of Hampton's cavalrymen and would have had a hard time of it, but for the enterprising bummers who had followed close behind.

One of the first communications received by Sherman from Schofield was brought by a scout to Lonergan at Fayetteville. He could not translate it and as it was addressed to Eddy it was turned over to him. The anxious moments awaiting its gradual translation may well be imagined, for what fortunes or misfortunes might have occurred during the interim from Savannah to Fayetteville all longed to discover.

Joe Anderson with Kilpatrick was having a livelier time, but had no very serious mishaps. On the 9th of February Kilpatrick ordered Anderson to take an escort of fifty men and tap the enemy's line at Windsor, S. C., but he found no circuit, and meeting with Griffin's scouts all pushed on four miles where four of the enemy were found, two of whom were killed, one wounded and one captured unhurt. The Unionists fired two grist mills and returned to head-quarters without other successes. On the twenty-second Anderson again tried near Winsboro, to connect with a line wire, but failed, and for want of better employment accompanied a flag of truce five and a half miles beyond the Union advance. Soon after, he with some officers of the staff went to a handsome house, where, representing themselves as belonging to General Butler's Confederate caval-

ry, they were handsomely feasted. At daylight of the 10th of March Hampton's cavalry dashed through the Union lines and completely surrounded Kilpatrick's quarters, capturing several of the staff. Kilpatrick himself barely escaped. Only he, Major Estes and Captain Brink were up. They hurried to the swamp and returned shortly after, driving away the enemy who meantime had captured Lieutenant Potter and Captain Brookfield while trying to get out of the house. Anderson and the others were up-stairs dressing as rapidly as possible and it was while they were so doing that the battle of Kilpatrick's headquarters, North Carolina, took place, resulting in killing eighty-six of the enemy, who carried off their wounded; quite a number of Confederate prisoners were taken.

On the 16th of March a more pretentious affair occurred near Averysboro, where Slocum's wing lost seventy-seven killed and four hundred and seventy-seven wounded, but Hardee's troops which had evacuated Charleston to oppose Sherman, were driven further on.

Johnston, commanding the concentrated forces from Savannah, Charleston, Augusta and other places, vigorously attacked Sherman's troops about Bentonville on the nineteenth, the attack resulting in a repulse. The Union losses were fifteen hundred and eighty-one killed, wounded and missing to Johnston's at least twenty-three hundred and forty-three. This inconsiderable struggle was the last of any note, between these contending forces, which however continued their respective tactics. Sherman's army moved to Goldsboro where it joined Schofield's from Newberne and Terry's from Wilmington. His force was thus raised to near ninety thousand men and one hundred guns.

Sherman was now in telegraphic communication with Newberne and Wilmington. Terry McGintey was operator at Fort Fisher; F. S. Clarke and R. Clapp at Wilmington, J. L. Sponagle, C. L. DeForrest and Carl Gifford at Kingston; L. M. Shurr, E. F. Wortman, H. B. Chamberlain, C. I. Thomas and R. B. VanDerhoef at Newberne; H. K. Clarke at Bachelors Creek; John E. O'Brien and J. L. Sears at Goldsboro; and James Powers, G. C. Felton and William Grasby at Moorhead City. Anderson with Kilpatrick at Mount Olive Station, seventeen miles from Goldsboro and the nearest camp to the enemy about Smithfield,

opened an office on the 24th of March. This office was destined to prove of great usefulness pending negotiations during April.

Having completed our tour to the various armies most nearly co-operating with those of the Potomac and James, we will soon be able to observe the death throes of the Rebellion, which had already passed beyond the purview of possible success. Grant's policy was to act offensively everywhere except about Petersburg, as he did not want to drive Lee upon Sherman or Sheridan. Accordingly Stoneman's cavalry of Thomas' command was sent east from East Tennessee toward Lynchburg; Wilson south from Eastport, Miss., to Selma and elsewhere; Canby on the Gulf was pushing vigorously against the defenses of Mobile, and Sheridan was sent February 27 on his last raid up the valley, during which he captured the enemy sixteen hundred strong confronting his force of ten thousand, destroyed the James River Canal and Virginia Central Railroad, and moved to White House on the Pamunkey, ready to take part in the last act of the great tragedy, which we reserve for another chapter.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE TELEGRAPH IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF THE GREAT SOUTH-WEST.—STONEMAN'S RAID.—REBEL WIRES TAPPED.—CONFEDERATES DISHEARTENED.—GUERRILLAS.—WILSON'S RAID.—SELMA, MONTGOMERY AND MACON CAPTURED.—SHERMAN ORDERS WILSON BY CONFEDERATE WIRES.—TELEGRAPH CASHIER ROBBED AND NEARLY MURDERED IN MISSOURI.—*RESUME* OF AFFAIRS IN MISSOURI.—CAPTAIN BRUCH'S DEATH.—MONUMENT.—CABLE LINE FROM NEW ORLEANS TO MOBILE BAY.—OPERATIONS AGAINST MOBILE.—ITS CAPTURE.—THE BAY CLEARED OF TORPEDOES BY THE CORPS.—THE RAM, WEBB, NEARLY ESCAPES TO THE SEA.—A TELEGRAPH FROM FEDERAL TO CONFEDERATE HEAD-QUARTERS.—TERRIBLE ACCIDENT.—A VENTURESOME RIDE; NARROW ESCAPE.—DEATH OF AN OPERATOR.—SOME SERIOUS JOKES.—THE WAR CLOSED IN THE SOUTH-WEST.

The year 1865 was the antithesis of A. D. 1861. 1861 was productive of disorganization; 1865, of re-organization. The spring of the former ushered in civil war; that of the latter announced its close. The former will ever be memorable for the evil it gave date to; but no less the latter, for that it brought peace to a suffering people. On the twelfth day of April, 1861, the disunionists opened fire on the national defenses of Charleston, the first coast city in the South to be seized *vi et armis*. On the twelfth day of April, 1865, the Unionists repossessed Mobile, Ala., the last Confederate coast city east of the Mississippi. In April, 1861, the war spirit throughout the South was at fever heat; in April, 1865, it was chilled through and through. In the beginning, the southerner was audaciously confident without victory, except at Sumter; in the end, he was amazingly subdued, without calamitous defeat, except at Nashville. It was not one grand climax of defeat, but a moral conviction that such a

catastrophe was impending, that produced a surcease of strife, for nearly two hundred thousand Confederates were in arms when the year began, comparatively few of whom were killed, captured or wounded. They confronted Grant about Petersburg, Sherman in the Carolinas, Sheridan in the Valley of Virginia; Stoneman, Gillem and Wilson, on their raids; Gilmore, about Charleston; Canby, about Mobile; Steele, in Arkansas, and numerous smaller commands. But everywhere the inferiority of the Confederates became more and more apparent as raiders brushed away opposition and armies pressed their sieges, or the foe in the field, until, at last in utter despair of the wicked cause, the end came, and foemen "shook hands over the bloody chasm."

It is our purpose in this chapter to pass from one department to another of the great South-western and Gulf States, and give as it were a panoramic view of the final struggles which culminated in a restoration of that territory to Federal authority. Beginning with East Tennessee, we shall discover the sweep of Union armies far into the Confederacy. We shall see expeditions start from Knoxville and Nashville, Tenn., and Eastport, Miss., New Orleans, La., and other places. We shall note their universal triumph and mark how Union success, so long uncertain, was now acknowledged by the vanquished as certainly as by the "boys in blue" and "those they left behind them."

Department of Ohio.

March 13, 1865, General Thomas proceeded to Knoxville with his staff and operator to organize a raiding expedition. There the General held interviews with Generals Stoneman, Tillson and Gillem, Governor Brownlow and others, on the fifteenth and sixteenth, returning the next day; and on the twenty-second General Stoneman began his great raid in aid of Grant's and Sherman's operations east. With three brigades of cavalry he reached Jonesboro on the twenty-sixth, which place Confederate General Jackson evacuated hastily. Not to detail the bold operations of the Federal force or detachments thereof, suffice it to say, that it penetrated the Confederate egg-shell a great distance, doing incalculable damage to railroads, telegraphs and depots of supply; occupying Boone, Wilkesboro, Mt. Airy,

Germantown, Danbury, Greensboro, Salisbury, N. C., Hillsville, Wythesville, Max Meadows, Jacksonville, Salem, Christianburg, Martinsville, Taylorsville, and Danville, Va. At Salisbury, N. C., Generals Gardner and J. C. Pemberton were utterly defeated, losing thirteen hundred prisoners and immense quantities of arms and supplies. Detachments having broken the railroad nearly to Lynchburg, Stoneman returned to East Tennessee, reaching LeNoir April 15; and in a few days Gillem took the division and effectually drove off all opposition far into North and South Carolina; almost reaching the route of Sherman's cavalry under Kilpatrick. These expeditions resulted in capturing forty-six guns, of which twenty-one were subsequently abandoned, and over six thousand prisoners.

John J. Wickham, who had been operating at the southernmost point on the Atlanta road (Dalton), since Sherman's march for the sea was summoned into East Tennessee shortly before Stoneman started and assigned to duty as cipher and field operator with that officer. His services with Stoneman and later with Gillem, were exceedingly useful. At the capture of Christianburg, Va., he captured the operator O'Neil, who was located at that point, by riding with two orderlies at midnight a mile ahead of the Federal column, into the town and up to the telegraph office. Quite a number of valuable telegrams were found there, and O'Neil was forced to give Wickham the office calls, which enabled him to deceive Lynchburg and other offices as to Federal operations. Near Thomasville, he narrowly escaped capture while tapping the telegraph. At this time he was not less than six miles from the command. Subsequently, while serving at General Thomas' head-quarters, he received this official acknowledgment of his services on these expeditions:

NASHVILLE, TENN., April 13, 1866.

MAJOR GENERAL THOMAS, Commanding Mil. Div. Miss., Nashville:

General:—I beg leave to recommend for an appointment as Second Lieutenant United States Army, J. J. Wickham, telegraph operator. Mr. Wickham accompanied my division on the raid into Virginia, North and South Carolina and Georgia, in the spring of 1865. Mr. Wickham attracted my attention by his alacrity, intelligence and gallantry. Not only did he perform the duties of his

own department in a most satisfactory manner, but was at all times ready to perform any service in his power, and often acted as A. D. C. He is young and educated.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

ALVAN C. GILLEM, *Maj. Genl. U. S. Vols.*

Telegraphers were otherwise of service to the military in this section. In March, in anticipation of Stoneman's movements, the line between Strawberry Plains and Bull's Gap was again (the fourth time) rebuilt, and preparations were made to add a second wire between Chattanooga and Knoxville to facilitate the moving of trains on the United States Military Railroads, and generally to expedite military operations. During April, this second line was constructed, and owing to Federal successes the telegraph along the East Tennessee and Virginia Road was rebuilt as far as Carter's Station, one hundred and ten miles from Knoxville. This line was operated in April, 1865, at Strawberry Plains, Bull's Gap, Jonesboro, Greenville and Carter's Station. Other telegraphic service in this section was of a routine character.

DEPARTMENT OF THE CUMBERLAND.

The great Union victory in front of Nashville in December, 1864, effectually settled the question as to which was the stronger power in this section, and that conclusion became more and more evident each day after Hood's overthrow, owing to frequent desertions. The total number of prisoners captured, and deserters who took the oath of allegiance from September 7, 1864, to January 20, 1865, was fifteen thousand, three hundred and ninety-six, besides there were captured seventy-two guns. As might have been expected, there remained however, "last ditchers" enough to make quite serious opposition to Federal detachments striking at long distances from their bases. The following telegram from a superintendent of the seaboard telegraph line to its president in Richmond, Va., dated at Milledgeville, Ga., January 10, 1865, clearly represents the Southern situation:

The feeling in Macon, Columbus, Atlanta and Gordon indicates that the ordinary Georgian thinks there is no further use in prolonging the contest in which they are sure to be beaten at last. The whole State is filled with deserters. Alabama is not a whit

better, and the Legislature of Mississippi refuses to allow the militia force to go into an adjoining county of its own State to repel an attack. There is no doubt the men of those States, already in the army will fight to the last, but the cry of the "stay-at-homes" is that it is useless to fight longer and they are no doubt encouraged in this idea by the Governor of Georgia, who it appears, is forever hunting up a pretext to fight Jeff Davis. It is reported to me by one of the superintendents of the Southern Express, upon the authority of a Judge in Tennessee, that Bragg had one hundred and three thousand men on his muster roll at the battle of Missionary Ridge, of which number sixty thousand were deserters, thus leaving him forty-three thousand men to bear the brunt of the fight. John Butler told me that Wheeler's muster roll calls for twenty-three thousand men, and that his pay-master told him he could only find seven thousand men in active service. Here now is a force of seventy-six thousand men at large, hiding in the swamps and fastnesses of this and contiguous country. From the feeling of the country people I am convinced no information would be given as to their hiding places.

Notwithstanding these facts, the ubiquitous guerrilla was abroad by night as in time when desertion was unpopular. February 22, of this year, about midnight a party of the latter, heavily armed, rode into Wartrace, Tenn., where Will F. Ware and another were operating, and captured Ware, an express agent, and Townsend, line repairer, whom they relieved of considerable money, watches and clothes; but Ware fortunately eluded them soon after, and called out the squad of soldiers stationed there, who rescued the others and killed the captain of the gang, whose home was near La Vergne, Tenn.

March 10, Normandy was raided in like manner, and operator Shaffer was captured and taken about five miles. Of course, he was robbed of everything but his shirt and pants. The instruments Shaffer found hidden in a hollow stump near his office. Operator R. B. Lines barely escaped being shot while riding on an engine on the Johnsonville road. Two of his comrades were not so fortunate. But in truth even guerrilla raids grew less frequent as Federal successes multiplied.

General Thomas left Pulaski (whither he went in pursuit of Hood) January 2, 1865, for Eastport, Miss. Stopping at Nash-

ville until the ninth, to fit out the expeditionary fleet which accompanied him, he reached Paducah on the tenth, where he counseled with Admiral Lee, with whom was cipher operator William Whitney. John O. Ingle and William Martin and a party of builders from Nashville, were landed at Johnsonville—the operators to work there, and the others to reconstruct the telegraph toward Nashville. On the fourteenth, Clifton was reached by the General. Schofield's Twenty-third Corps, in camp there, was ordered to Annapolis, Md., and J. J. Cassell, Schofield's operator sent to General Paine at Paducah. A. J. Smith's corps was found at Eastport, and Thomas, who went into camp there, having dispatched Smith's troops and Knipe's cavalry to aid Canby in capturing Mobile, and arranged for General J. H. Wilson's cavalry expedition, returned to Nashville, as we have seen, to start Stoneman's. John J. Egan, Smith's operator, accompanied him to the Gulf.

Although Wilson's movements were co-operative with Canby's, who was operating against Mobile, yet as these forces did not unite, we will treat the expedition as entirely distinct, for it was co-operative only because it was diversionary. Wilson's three divisions under McCook, Long and Upton, started from near Eastport, Miss., March 23. Confederate General Forrest's cavalry was mainly at West Point, Miss., Roddy's at Montevallo, Ala., and Hood's infantry at Tupelo, Miss., under Dick Taylor's command. Moving by nearly parallel routes in three columns, not far distant, to Elyton, whence Croxton's brigade was sent to Tuscaloosa, the main column pressed on through Montevello toward Selma, defeating Roddy and then encountering Forrest. Croxton was engaged with Jackson. Upton and Long, in a pitched battle defeated Forrest on the Selma road, driving him that day twenty-four miles. The situation was anything but pleasing to the Confederates. Henry F. Lines United States Telegraph and Cipher operator, accompanied Wilson, and doubtless tried his hand at tapping Confederate lines. March 30, J. B. Tree, of the American Company's lines (South), telegraphed to its President, as follows:

AUGUSTA, GA., March 30, 1865.

To DR. W. S. MORRIS, President, Richmond, Va.:

Nettles reports the Blue Mountain line was tapped by a Yankee operator. He obtained no information. Found him out too soon.

J. B. TREE, *Gen. Supt.*

And later another:

AUGUSTA, GA., April 1, 1865.

To DR. W. S. MORRIS, Richmond, Va.:

Nettles reports we have been defeated above Selma, and there are serious apprehensions of the safety of that place. The enemy are now advancing on Selma, following the line of the Alabama & Tennessee Railroad. The struggle for the possession of the place will, it is thought, take place to-day.

J. B. TREE, *Gen. Supt.*

Later, telegrams announced that "Nettles reports the situation brighter. Superintendent Merriwether reports heavy fighting to-day at Spanish Fort and Blakely." "The Montgomery office is informed by General Roddy's operator, who came on the line on the east side of the Alabama river, that the enemy flanked us on our left at Selma at dark this evening, capturing the place. General Taylor has gone in the direction of Demopolis." William M. Nettles referred to above, was managing operator at Selma. It is reported that he acquired during the war, the sobriquet of "Peach-tree Nettles," owing to his remarkable haste to perform some service, while the Yankees were in close proximity. Instead of quietly untying his horse which was hitched to a standing peach tree, he carried it off with him.

The day after defeating Forrest, General Long's division appeared before Selma. Long and Upton lost no time awaiting reinforcements, but brilliantly assaulted the works, and captured the town, losing forty killed and two hundred and sixty wounded. Operator Lines "put up" the following cipher for Israel A. Sherman, cipher operator with General Canby, who was then working against Spanish and Blakely Forts, defenses of Mobile:

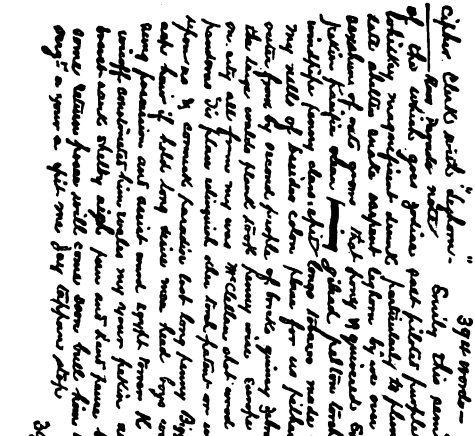
This cipher, which is here shown, was carefully sewed in the

lapel of a citizen's coat, worn by a soldier who was sent to Canby with it. Translated, it reads as follows:

HEAD-QUARTERS CAVALRY CORPS.
SELMA, April 4, 1865, 10 A. M.

For MAJOR GENERAL E. R. S. CANBY, Mobile.

General: — My corps took this place by assault late on the evening of the second. We have captured twenty field guns, two thousand prisoners, besides over two thousand in hospital, and large quantity of military stores of all kinds. The arsenals and foundries with their machinery are in my possession intact. I shall burn them to-day, with everything else useful to the enemy. I have already destroyed the iron works north of here, eight or ten in all, and very extensive. Forrest, Dick Taylor, Adams, Armstrong and Roddy succeeded in getting out in the darkness and confusion, following the assault, by wading the swamp east of the city. The place is strongly fortified with two continuous stockades on the glacis, extending from river above to river below the city. They were defended by



FAC SIMILE CIPHER.

four brigades of cavalry and all the first and second class militia of this section, from six to nine thousand men. The conduct of my troops, particularly that of Long's division, which made the attack, was magnificent. General Long was wounded slightly in the head; Colonel Dobbs, Fourth Ohio, killed; Colonels Miller, McCormick, Biggs, wounded. It's my desire and intention to hold the place as long as possible. I shall not relinquish my hold upon it except to secure other advantages. If I can keep Forrest west of the Cahawba till I have constructed bridge over the Alabama, I will move against him or Montgomery, as circumstances may determine operations westward rather than forward. Montgomery will, in my estimation, assist you most. Please hurry forward your gunboats and transports with the utmost rapidity. Take possession of this place, and allow me to finish up Forrest's cavalry. Upton is now after him with Second Division. This will be handed you by Sergeant Bailey, Fourth Michigan Cavalry, a brave and dashing soldier. Please order him a handsome remuneration, and return him to me as soon as possible.

(Signed.) J. H. WILSON,
Brevet Maj. Gen'l.

The Selma victory rendered the success of Wilson's further operations certain, and moving eastward, he captured Montgomery on the twelfth. At this time John K. Mingle was manager of the telegraph office there, and William H. Benton, Alf. Saville, Jerry McLaughlin, Jerry Reid, Barney Hughes and J. G. Thornton were operators. These men did not stay to make Wilson's acquaintance. Thornton and Benton retreating kept well to the rear of the Confederate troops, and every little while telegraphed to Columbus, Ga., the progress of the enemy. There a useless resistance was made when the Unionists approached. Twelve hundred prisoners and fifty-two guns were captured; also operator Thornton, who was robbed and paroled and probably L. R. Hoopes, chief operator at that place and others, as the town was taken at night. Macon was captured April 20.

The fact of an armistice between the Eastern armies was here communicated to Wilson, and his operator, Lines, put in cipher, a message to be sent over Confederate wires to General Sherman at Raleigh, N. C., inquiring if it applied to Wilson's

forces, and was advised in like manner that it did. Croxton's force and other detachments subsequently arrived at Macon after doing great damage. The success of Wilson's expedition had been remarkable. Immense quantities of cotton, stores and war material and hundreds of miles of railroads and telegraphs, and many steamboats had been destroyed. Stoneman, Gillem, Sherman and Wilson had severed and bankrupted the Confederacy. However, the armistice was disapproved and Wilson's command was ordered forward.

Kansas, Arkansas and Missouri.

Let us now turn our attention Westward. Guerrillas there were, and plentiful in Arkansas and Missouri, but they did not interrupt telegraphic communication, now fully restored between Little Rock and St. Louis, so much as formerly. From October 1, 1864 to June 30, Captain Clowry succeeded in keeping his lines "almost constantly in operation day and night to the full satisfaction of all officers from the division to post commanders." As the country became more settled and peaceable, he gradually reduced expenses. His one thousand, seven hundred and two miles of line in the States of Missouri, Kansas and Arkansas were operated, constructed and repaired at an average cost of $15,000 per month. Considering that these lines were single, *i. e.*, one set of poles for every circuit, thus necessitating a full force of men on every line, and the country overrun with desperate characters, Clowry's success and expenditures compare favorably with others.

The following lines were in operation in this Department under Clowry; that to Fort Smith and Little Rock having been restored shortly after Price's defeat in the fall of 1864:

	MILES.
St. Louis to Fort Smith, Ark.,	403
St. Louis to New Madrid, Mo.,	207
St. Louis to Macon, Mo.,	168
St. Louis City Lines,	10
Pilot Knob, Mo., to Patterson, Mo.,	28
Bloomfield, Mo., to Cape Girardeau,	45
Jefferson City, Mo., to Syracuse,	43
Allen *via* Booneville and Weston, Mo., to St. Joseph, Mo.,	296
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, to Fort Scott, Kansas,	120
Little Rock, Ark., to mouth White River, Ark.,	152
Little Rock, Ark., to Pine Bluff,	45
Little Rock, Ark., to Fort Smith,	185
	1702

Four hundred and twenty-three thousand, six hundred and ninety telegrams were sent over the lines during the year ending June 30, 1865.

The following sworn statement explains itself, and illustrates the dangers on the highways, notwithstanding the complete dispersion of organized troops:

STATE OF MISSOURI, } ss.
Barry County. }

Robert Willis, being duly sworn, deposes and says, that he is employed as traveling cashier of the United States Military Telegraph, Department of the Missouri, and while acting in that capacity, to wit: on the evening of July 25, 1865, whilst traveling from Fayetteville, Ark., to Cassville, Mo., in company with Reuben Carter, telegraph repairer, and another person whose name is to this affiant unknown, but who was acting as escort to this affiant, they overtook three mounted men who are unknown to this affiant; that said three men during all of that day continued in company with said escort until about five o'clock in the afternoon, when the said escort upon their own suggestion, returned to Fayetteville; that shortly thereafter, this affiant being in advance of the three men aforesaid, heard a pistol fired, and upon looking back, became convinced that he was the person fired at, and being unarmed, he then spurred his horse in the hopes that he might elude his pursuers, who continued firing and shortly came up with this affiant, and when quite close fired again, the ball this time passing through the body of this affiant, and that shortly thereafter, the horse of this affiant fell with him and thereupon the said men came up with this affiant, and the one who had fired upon this affiant then robbed this affiant of over eleven hundred dollars, which this affiant carried in a bag suspended from his neck on the inside of his shirt. This affiant further states that the said telegraph repairer well knew that this affiant so carried his money in said bag, and from the conversation carried on between said men, this affiant is convinced that the said repairer informed the said men that this affiant had money and where he carried it. This affiant further says, that the person who had wounded him wished to kill him and said he would do so, but that his companions would not agree to this proposition, and thereupon the said men having so robbed this affiant, left him upon the road. This affiant says that after being so shot and robbed he rode on to the first house upon the road, where he was met by two men

from Cassville, who had been sent to meet him. Further this affiant saith not. ROBERT WILLIS.

Attest, S. V. HOWELL, Operator U. S. Mil. Tel.

Sworn to and subscribed before me, this twenty-sixth day of July, 1865. A. S. STRATTON,

Captain Second Ohio Cavalry, Comdg. Post.

Willis recovered. Colonel M. LaR. Harrison scoured the country with the First Arkansas cavalry and caught the robbers, two of whom were Iowa deserters. Of course they were severely dealt with.

As late as the middle of May it continued necessary to patrol the lines even as far north as Lexington, Warrensburg and Independence. But without a pretext the guerrilla was rapidly disappearing.

The military operators in these three States had accomplished wonders. To name a few would be to wrong the many. If sometimes a telegrapher, living at a distance from scenes of activity, from laudable pleasures, from society, from friends, from Unionists, and immured in the backwoods of Missouri, Kansas or Arkansas, where he was fed on corn dodgers and pork, where the staple drink was horrible coffee or worse whisky,—if he, sometimes, to drive off *ennui*, indulged in that which was worse, it is not, perhaps, more surprising than that he voluntarily exiled himself, for the good he might do while living the life of a recluse. Let him who harshly condemns these solitarians for sometimes trying the "inordinate cup," whose "invisible spirit cheers the sad, * * makes weariness forget his toil and fear her danger," first try to serve his country in times of passion and crime, far removed from sympathetic souls, with no rank to maintain, no courts-martial to restrain and no prospective promotion to attain. The sinless man who was never tempted, may have angel wings as a deer does antlers, and be entitled to as much credit. But, resisting in the main, all untoward influences, the operator in these parts zealously, uncomplainingly and unremittingly strove to perform his duties, and was successful. Near half a million of telegrams transmitted in twelve months showed in part the active work, but nothing but the wan face, "sicklied o'er with the pale cast

of thought," evidenced the dry rot that was slowly undermining the vigor of youth, in the solitudes of this Department.

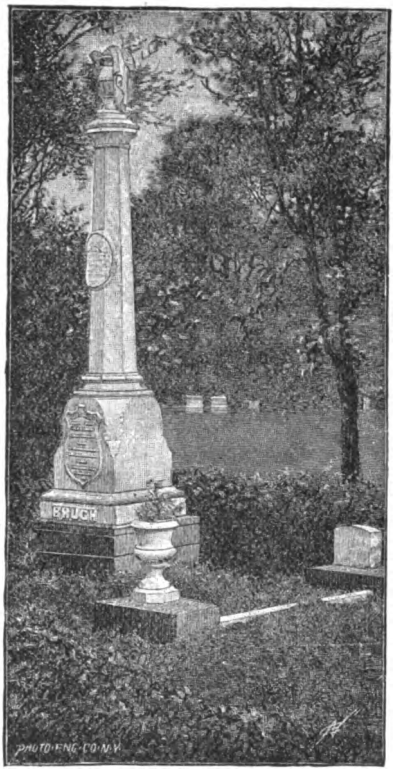
To Theodore Holt, at Little Rock, Dwight Byington, at Leavenworth, and Charles A. Hammann, at St. Louis, Mo., Assistant Superintendents, belong a large share of the credit due the employés under Captain Clowry, that model officer who began his career as Superintendent in these States, under Colonel Stager, by forbidding speculation in employés' vouchers, whereby the Shylock business received a merited quietus.

Department of the Tennessee.

Affairs within this Department remained substantially unchanged from the time of Grierson's raid to that of Wilson's. Corinth continued in possession of the Confederates even later. Captain Bruch's personal supervision over the Memphis district was arranged for in the spring of 1865, and Captain Fuller, of New Orleans, was relieved thereof. Consequently, Bruch went to Memphis late in March to examine into matters there, intending to return, when they were well arranged, to Louisville. It so happened that General Thomas, who was commander of the Military Division of the Mississippi, went to Memphis that month, arriving at General C. C. Washburne's on the twenty-sixth, and leaving the next day for Nashville. It was on this trip, and at Washburne's, that the author last saw Captain Bruch, who intended returning with us to Nashville, but was detained by business, and three days later he died.

No sooner had word passed from place to place, that Captain Bruch was dead, than with one accord the Corps in the Division of the Mississippi, which embraced his territory, began to take action looking to the erection of a suitable monument. Upon being advised of the desires of the employés, his widow, in view especially of the strong feeling of her late husband against gifts that are virtually forced from others by reason of the subordinate positions they occupy, making the donors timid about refusing what perhaps they could not afford to spare, consented to the erection of such a monument, *provided* that no assessment be levied therefor, but every contribution be voluntarily given. In Captain Gross' department alone, four hundred and fifty-five dollars was thus raised. In the Departments of the Cumberland and

Tennessee, a much larger sum was collected. In the beautiful cemetery at Canton, Ohio, overhung by graceful trees and surrounded by well trimmed evergreens, at the grave of Captain Bruch stands the imposing monument, which the telegraphers purchased and placed *in memoriam*, where, let us hope, it will tend to indicate the worth of the deceased and the appreciation of his friends many centuries after all of us shall have rendezvoused on like camping grounds. Engraven on the shaft is the following: "Erected by the officers and employés of the U. S. Mil. Telegraph Corps, Military Division of the Mississippi;" on the pedestal is engraven, "Capt. S. Bruch, Asst. Supt. U. S. Mil. Telegraph Mil. Div. Miss. Born in Stark Co., Ohio, Dec. 30, 1831. Died in Memphis, Tenn., March 31, 1865;" and on the base, "Bruch." Captain Van-Duzer succeeded to the superintendency of the Division of the Mississippi.



BRUCH'S MONUMENT.

SAMUEL BRUCH was born near Canton, Ohio, December 30, 1831. His parents were of German descent, and natives of Pennsylvania. When Samuel was thirteen years old, his father died. His mother was left with six young children and, owing to the long illness of his father, with little property, except the unpretentious home in which they lived. Until Samuel was sixteen years old, he worked at any labor he could get to do, and every penny earned was given to his mother. He did not go to school after his father's death. At the age of sixteen, with his mother's consent, he decided to learn the tailor's trade, and went to Canton in search of a situation in one of the shops. He vis-

ited every one in the town, but being a stranger was refused the work he sought. "No boy wanted." Much discouraged, he returned that night to his mother's house tired and foot-sore, having walked that day fully thirty miles. Soon after this, a lady who was a stranger to him but who had observed his faithfulness to duty, and knew of his unsuccessful attempt to get work in Canton, sent for him and gave him a letter to a gentleman of influence in C., commending him as "a boy who was trying to help himself and his widowed mother." By the kindness of this gentleman, he soon found work as apprentice to a tailor. Beside his board and lodging, he received from his employer twenty dollars per year, with which to clothe himself. He worked all day and much of the time until nine o'clock at night. Any extra money was made by working "over hours," either in the early morning or late at night.

It was while he was learning his trade that the first telegraph line, erected along the old stage route from Pittsburgh, Pa., west, reached Canton. The office was across the hall in the same building as the tailor shop. Long after, Mr. Bruch said that "from the time the office was established, and he could hear the tick, tick, ticking of the instrument, he felt that he *must* know *what* it was saying." Out of his poverty, by overwork he paid the the operator fourteen dollars for teaching him what he could of the art of telegraphy. Of course, the time for practice had to be found outside of the time belonging to his employer. Bruch still expected to be a tailor, and was much surprised two or three months before his apprenticeship expired, at being offered the position of operator in the Canton office. He arranged to buy the remainder of his time from his employer, and entered the Canton office at a salary of twenty dollars per month, a great sum in those days for lads to earn.

He remained there seven months, and then accepted an offer to go to Waynesboro, in Southern Middle Tennessee, where there was a junction of three or four lines, belonging to different telegraph companies. By working before and after office hours in Canton, he "made up" the new clothes he was to take with him. He also provided himself with such books as he thought would be of use to him in the pursuit of the knowledge which he was not permitted to obtain in school. He left Canton on May

1, 1852, for Waynesboro, Tennessee, a journey of nearly one thousand miles, most of the way by steamboat, with twenty-six dollars, for traveling expenses and any other that might be incurred before receiving pay for work in the W. office. He suffered much from loneliness and homesickness at first, and felt keenly the difference in the way of the country and people, but determined to stay and overcome his feelings. His salary there was seven hundred dollars per year. He remained in Waynesboro about three years, when the lines were consolidated and became known as South-western Telegraph Company's lines.

SAMUEL BRUCH.

He was then offered a situation at Nashville, Tenn., where he served two years, at the end of which the company offered him a situation in Memphis, Tenn., where, as in Nashville, he named his own salary. During the seven years spent in these offices, he made use of leisure time in improving his mind by reading standard works, also by hard study of text books, such as grammar, philosophy and chemistry. During all his life he was a student, and accumulated a fund of knowledge superior to many who pass all their youth in school.

By the time of his marriage (1859), Bruch had the feeling, which sooner or later comes to all operators, *i. e.*, that some other business was more desirable, and hence he intended the following summer to quit telegraphy and locate in Galion, Ohio, where he had already bought property and entered into partnership. Soon after marriage he was offered the place of chief operator of South-western telegraph lines, at Louisville, Ky., and

decided to remain there at least one year. During that time he was offered the position of Superintendent by the telegraph company, but declined it, not wishing to be absent so much of the time from his home, and looking forward to leaving telegraphy very soon. He often said he did not wish to continue in a business where there was so little opportunity for growth or promotion, and from the *first*, determined, by economizing and careful investment of surplus means, to make himself *independent* of the companies employing him—serving them as faithfully as he could, yet keeping himself in a position to decline to go to any place or office that might be distasteful to him. This very disposition or characteristic made him valuable to the company. A subservient spirit never rises any higher than a fault-finding one. In the summer of 1860, he again expected to go to Ohio, but his partner persuaded him to remain in Louisville one year longer. During that year the war of the Rebellion began. Determined to leave Kentucky should that State secede from the Union, he remained in the office at Louisville, acting as censor for the Government over all telegrams for the South, during the summer of 1861. The night that Confederate General Buckner invaded Kentucky with an armed force, General Robert Anderson, commanding at Louisville, sent for Mr. Bruch to come to the depot of the Nashville Railroad and take charge of the telegraph lines. Bruch did what he could to repair damages to the wires, and as the troops advanced south, communication between them and the city was established, and kept up largely by his aid. Anson Stager, manager Military Telegraph in McClellan's great department, in a subsequent interview with Doctor Norvin Green (President South-western Telegraph Company), said to him: "The United States Government is not disposed to interfere with the management of your lines, unless it becomes necessary to do so. Have you any one in your employ whom you can recommend as manager for the Government?" Doctor Green answered: "We have one man in our employ whose *executive* ability I can not recommend, for he has not been tried in that capacity, but he has two qualifications necessary in one filling the place, he is *loyal* and *honest*, that man is our chief operator, Sam Bruch!" When Stager accepted Bruch as his assistant in managing for the United States, the South-

western Company made him its Superintendent also. For nearly one year Bruch acted nominally as a sort of clerk for Stager, though really managing the details in this district, as much as he afterwards did. In August, 1862, Bruch was commissioned by United States as captain and assistant quarter-master.

There are so many misleading roads on which operators have ever been found, that in reviewing thus concisely Bruch's career up to the date of his commission, we involuntarily ask, may not this brief biographical sketch serve as a guide to point out better ways.

Department of the Gulf.

While General Thomas was preparing Wilson's expedition, General Canby was organizing a larger force to operate directly against Mobile. It had long been evident to the Confederates that Mobile was next in order for attack, it being the only coast city of magnitude (except Charleston, S. C., which surrendered in February, 1865), yet under Disunion rule. They knew that preparations on a grand scale were making to reduce this place, already effectually blockaded. Our last view showed Federal possession of the outlying sea forts, with telegraphic connection by cable. In anticipation of land operations, Captain Fuller was directed late in 1864, to connect New Orleans with Forts Morgan and Gaines, but the enemy held the land routes. It was coast or nothing, and after a careful examination, a possible but doubtful way was selected, as follows: from New Orleans to Fort Macomb, thence along Chef Menteur Pass and the swamps to Alligator Point; thence by cable across Lake Borgne, nine miles, to Point Aux Marchettes and across bayous Catherine, Biloxi, Little Cable, Dixon, False Bay, Nine Mile Bayou, Boudreaux, Three Mile Bayou, Lagoon Jones, Grand Pass, Blind Bay, Johnson's, Dead Man's Bayou, and the pass between Isle Du Pied and Cat Island, four and a half miles; thence about four miles of land line on Cat Island and cable connecting Ship Island, six and one-half miles; using twenty-three miles of cable, besides the land lines wherever possible. This was further extended from Ship Island across to Horn Island, twelve miles and land lines over Horn Island, thence to Petit Bois Island, four miles by cable, and land line over this island. The cable supply

here gave out and the Dauphin Island line connecting with Fort Gaines could not be laid. The laying of these cables was rendered extremely hazardous by the severe south-easterly gales called in that section "three day storms." Fuller and his co-laborers, including operator John R. Dixon, several times narrowly escaped drowning in the surf. The line worked to Ship Island from March 5, to the eleventh, when the cable gave out and from the seventeenth to April 14, but connection was never completed to Fort Gaines, consequently despatch-boats were used. Captain Fuller was indefatigable in his efforts and felt conscious that everything was done that promised success, to accomplish the work of keeping New Orleans and the army advancing up Mobile Bay in telegraphic communication, but the frail nature of the armor wires covering the Red Sea cable that was used, and the action of the currents and quicksands in the island passes, could not be overcome, nor could the constant and severe south-easterly gales which prevailed to a very unusual extent during this season. To these causes alone was attributed the slow progress of the work and final failure of the scheme. William T. House, operator, was located at Ship Island, Alvan A. Howard at Cat Island and Charles O. Connor on Horn Island.

Canby rendezvoused his forces in January at Kennersville, about ten miles above New Orleans. General Steele was in command there, where William T. House was operator. Algernon W. O'Neal was at this time and some months later chief operator with the "Pack Mule Train." This organization was about to carve a name for itself in the swamps, sands, muck and clay along the telegraph routes in Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana and Texas. With it in February and March, were operators G. W. Baxter, Z. P. Hotchkiss and John R. Frank. Hotchkiss, who is *now* an author and poet, *then* made this train the subject of his muse, in part to the following descriptive effect:

Spirit of ancient Morse, awaken!
Too soon you'll slip the mortal coil.
Half thy honor now is taken
By those who former plans would spoil,

Now, through the camp O'Neal and staff
Display the newly conceived rules

For field work, and a telegraph
Carried upon the backs of mules.

What! they, amid the cannon's rattle,
The clang of strife, the flash of fire,
Steal from 'neath the cloud of battle
And chain the lightnings to a wire?

Yes! When foe with foe contending,
Man against man and steel 'gainst steel,
Then, from loaded mules, outsending
An iron wire from off the "reel,"

To join this with other stations,
By dreaded chains of Yankee wire,
O'er which t' dart communications,
Swiftly as Heaven's electric fire.

See, the work is now completed;
Hark! 'T was the trembling magnet spoke:
"Gen'ral! Here! the foe 's retreated
From 'neath our fire through yonder smoke.

"Quick, charge your caissoned batteries!
Stand ready, boys, to fire the mine;
Pause not for thankful flatteries,
But charge—charge along the line!"

Dots, dashes, dots—the word 's spoken
From corps to corps, from post to post:
"Hip, hip, hurrah! their line is broken;
We have beaten the rebel host."

Along ours, the red fire pouring
On center, rear—on front and flanks—
Though they'd withstand the big guns roaring,
Yankee lightning breaks their ranks.

Everything being ready by the middle of March, Canby, with twenty-five thousand men or more, aided by Admiral Thatcher's fleet of gunboats, began operations. A. J. Smith, with whom was J. J. Egan, operator, landed his corps at Fort Gaines, and Knipe's cavalry marched overland, accompanied by operator M. H. Bassett. Israel A. Sherman was with Canby, and with General Steele who moved up from Pensacola, was operator B. H. Upham. Operators John R. Dixon, Louis H. Korty and George R. Penn were general utility men. Charles W. Pearson and Stephen L. Robinson were located at the temporary army quar-

ters at Navy Cove, ten miles from Fort Morgan, on Bon Secour Bay, which place was connected by a land line five miles long, and cable of equal length. Here also came operators C. B. Smith and Benjamin Dorsey, *alias* Dorsey Berry, awaiting the advance of the army; and here, too, came the pack mule train and its *attachés*, including O'Neal, Hotchkiss, Frank and Baxter.

Steele, moving from Pensacola, met and defeated General Clanton, capturing and dispersing his force of eight hundred. Canby advanced along the eastern shore of Mobile Bay, against Spanish Fort, at the same time Steele invested Fort Blakely. These proved to be the defenses of Mobile, and if taken, the city must surrender. The pack mule people built a line as the army advanced from Navy Cove thirty-five miles to Fish River, which was soon after abandoned.

On the Confederate side, the military telegraphs about Mobile were under the superintendence of C. G. Merriwether and William Sandford, the latter then and now manager of the city office. The field lines radiated from the city connecting with, among other stations, Spanish Fort, where James Stinson operated until relieved shortly before the siege by J. L. Adam, a member of Colonel Patton's Regiment. Fort Blakely was also in circuit, as were Batteries McIntosh and Montrose, at which latter place was operator Philip Delgado. Delgado and Adam used to crack their jokes over the wire in French, much to the annoyance of the other operators, who could only make out the "ha ha's" and their own names. Besides repairing and operating, Delgado managed a little pine-knot still of his own, at Montrose, where he made that which smarts like pepper on a raw throat. Adam fared better, as Crane came to his aid just before the arrival of the Federals, and Post Surgeon Clanton, a brother of the General's, joined the telegraph mess, bringing thereto as an appetizer, the best hospital whisky. Crane was an industrious fellow. He induced his assistant to do nearly all the telegraphing, while he busied himself making shoes for the soldiers at about one hundred dollars per pair. In the Mobile city office were operators Louis F. Zantzinger, John Bohanna, Thomas Eastland, Ed. Leloup and one or two others. Zantzinger is one of the oldest living telegraphers. He operated in

Washington, D. C., as early as 1845. He saw much active military service under Beauregard and Bragg from April 19, 1862, to August 24, 1862, as "Military Superintendent of Telegraphs," but on account of his situation, prospects and family ties, his service at Corinth, Tupelo and Chattanooga was rather to earn a livelihood than to forward the cause. Bohanna was a bright, intelligent and cheerful fellow. He served in the Columbus, Miss., office in 1861, going to Mobile in the fall of 1863, and after the war became agent there of the New York Associated Press. Thomas Eastland was another genial companion, but physically unfit for the exacting hours of a siege. He died of consumption since the war, at his home in Huntsville, Ala., mourned by all who knew him.

Montrose was an out-post station, and Delgado hastily retired *beyond* the Fort. On came Canby and the Pack Mule Train. March 29, 1865, O'Neal wrote from in front of Spanish Fort, that he was working a siege line of nearly seven miles, with four offices on it, and perhaps would have to open more offices at the other head-quarters in a day or so: That the Corps beat the Signal folks in getting the wire working just one day, and that General Canby seemed to think he had no use for an office on their wire; consequently the telegraphers operated the only line having an office at Canby's head-quarters. April 1, the Signal Corps put up a line, but it did not work right, and the operators did all of the business.

April 7, O'Neal reported:

I am now working fifteen miles of siege line surrounding Spanish and Huger Forts and Fort Blakely and numerous water batteries, rifle pits, etc. The offices are at our base of supplies, Stark's Wharf, head-quarters Thirteenth Army Corps, head-quarters Sixteenth Army Corps, head-quarters of the army and head-quarters General Steele's command. Our lines are worked night and day and the operators are all giving out. Upham at head-quarters Thirteenth Army Corps can not read by sound and he is the only man I can get. As it is, business is delayed by sending so slow to him, for the line is kept red hot sending messages all the time and in a delay of fifteen minutes, business accumulates at all the offices. Can you send two or three sound operators? They are needed badly and I am afraid the boys will give out now before they ar-

rive. The way we work it now Colonel Christensen has a man detailed at each office to set up nights and when the instrument works, he wakes the operator. Nearly every night two or three offices are kept busy all night so that the others are awakened almost every minute. The General and Colonel Christensen (chief of staff) say this telegraph is everything to them. The Colonel says he don't know how they could get along now without it.

About sundown April 8, Canby intent on an assault upon Spanish Fort advanced a few troops to intrench and sharpshoot, but the brave soldiers found it necessary to press on without stopping and being promptly supported, captured the key to the fort which determined its commander to evacuate that night.

The following telegrams indicate the general character of messages sent over the field wires and explain passing events:

FLAG SHIP STOCKDALE, 8:45 P. M., April 8, 1865.

MAJOR GENERAL CANBY, Commanding Army, Department Gulf:

Your despatch of eight P. M. just received. I congratulate you on your success this P. M. A splendid shelling you gave them. Could not be surpassed. I am now hard at work and have been all last night and all day and shall be all this night clearing the ground for the monitors to advance, and I will try to put them within shelling distance to-morrow. Torpedoes very numerous, one hundred pounds powder in many of them. I shall persevere. I have a one hundred pound Parrott *en route* from Pensacola, all fitted.

(Signed) H. K. THATCHER, *A. R. Admiral.*

HEAD-QUARTERS THIRTEEN ARMY CORPS, April 9, 1865.

MAJOR GENERAL A. J. SMITH, Commanding Sixteenth A. C.:

Your mortar firing last night was excellent, and relieved my line considerably. Two mortar shots from your line at about one o'clock this morning were especially good, but fired a trifle more to the right would have done even better.

(Signed.) G. GRANGER, *Maj. Genl.*

FLAG SHIP STOCKDALE, April 9, 1865.

MAJOR GENERAL CANBY, Commanding Army:

I have just received your despatch, and have to thank you for the information relative to the number of prisoners and guns captured in the Forts. I trust we may be as fortunate at Blakely,

which must, I think, compel them to yield the city without further fighting. So soon as matters are settled on this side, I propose to cross the bay with most of the naval force. Do you think favorably of a demonstration on the western shore and a demand for surrender of the town? I am General, etc.,

(Signed.) H. K. THATCHER, *A. R. Adml.*

HEAD-QUARTERS THIRTEENTH ARMY CORPS, April 9, 1:35 A. M.

MAJOR GENERAL A. J. SMITH, Commanding Sixteenth A. C.

You were late! We had possession of Fort Alexis and Spanish Fort an hour before we heard from you. *Our men are asleep inside now.* (Signed.) G. GRANGER, *Maj. Genl.*

C. S. operators, Crane and Adam, just before this had trouble to escape Federal shells, one of which upset their office. When they moved to the plateau fronting the river, they were still within range of the Union guns. When Spanish Fort was evacuated, the troops silently crossed on a treadway which was built from shore to shore, and hidden by weeds. The soldiers' boots were removed to prevent noise. The operators, Crane and Adams, were ordered to remain until about midnight, when they were to take a skiff for Battery Tracy. As they and certain others reached the boat, the Nationals having discovered the evacuation were approaching with shouts of victory. Only the darkness afforded any protection. Wading out to the skiff one man was shot dead, perhaps by a chance fire, may be by design. A moment's halt enabled the party to lay the poor unfortunate on the shore, and then with muffled oars the operators pulled out into the darkness and out of range, two miles away, to Tracy.

April 9, the word went over the wire, "charge along the line in front of Blakely," and about 5:30 P. M. came the tug of war. The carnage was awful. One thousand Unionists and five hundred Confederates were killed or wounded in ninety minutes, but Blakely was captured, and with it three thousand prisoners.

Mobile itself was next, and with it and its additional defenses, one hundred and fifty guns and other valuable arms and property. It was evacuated on the eleventh, and surrendered the next day. General Maury, commanding, retreated up the

Alabama River with nine thousand men. Thus fell the last coast city east of the Mississippi. It cost the Federals twenty-five hundred in killed and wounded.

Besides Zantzinger, Eastland, Bohanna and Leloup, operators at Mobile, George S. Hanna, Charles M. Sabin, Henry E. Nichols and J. M. Worden took the oath of allegiance, and were employed by Captain Fuller.

Admiral Thatcher having applied to Captain Fuller for aid in "blowing up submerged obstructions in Mobile Bay," including torpedoes, that accomplished electrician David Elphick was sent from New Orleans with proper appliances and a steam tug for that purpose. In the bay, seconded by other operators, Elphick, by use of the "plan," located the infernal machines and sinking cans of powder alongside, connected by insulated wire with the battery on the tug Blossom, exploded one torpedo after another until the bay was free and clear.

Superintendent Tree's instructions to Merriwether not to leave a single instrument in Mobile in case it became necessary to evacuate, had been strictly obeyed. The office was completely gutted.

Negotiations for the surrender of the escaping Confederates were carried on largely by telegraph. For this purpose, by mutual consent, the wires were repaired, and Federal operator Robinson actually took charge of the Citronelle office before the surrender of the troops there. The following are two of the messages sent over southern wires at this time:

HEAD-QUARTERS, MOBILE, May 3, 1865.

COLONEL RITTER, Whistler, Ala.:

General Canby and party of about six officers leave the city at eight to morrow morning, to meet General Taylor (Confederate) at Citronelle.

(Signed.) C. T. CHRISTENSEN, *Lt. Col. and A. A. G.*

MERIDIAN, MISS., May 2, 1865.

By Telegraph and Flag of Truce.

To COMMODORE I. S. PALMER, U. S. N.,

Commanding Naval Forces, Mobile:

Sir:—I have the honor to request a personal interview with you at such time and place as you may request for the purpose of ar-

ranging terms for surrender of the forces of the Confederate States Navy now commanded by me. Learning that Major General Canby and Lieutenant General Taylor will probably meet under a flag of truce very soon, I respectfully suggest that if it suits your convenience our proposed meeting shall occur at same time and place which Major General Canby may appoint for his meeting with Lieutenant General Taylor. I have the honor, etc.

(Signed) E. FERRAND, *Flag Officer,*
Comdg. C. S. Naval Forces.

The surrender of Taylor's and Ferrand's commands took place on the 4th day of May at Citronelle, Ala.

It was now evident to the most obtuse rebel that the end was at hand and that restoration would soon be in order. Turning from this locality for the present, to preserve the chronological order of events in this department, let us observe, first, the dying gasp of the Confederate navy.

The C. S. ram W. H. Webb, ran the blockade at the mouth of the Red River at night, laden with merchandise, and hurrying down the Mississippi passed New Orleans April 24, in *broad daylight.* The way it happened that telegraphic news had not preceded it was this. Every little while between Baton Rouge and Donaldsonville and the latter place and Bonnett Carre, and Bonnett Carre and New Orleans the boat was stopped and a gig carrying a long rope was rowed ashore; one end of the rope was fastened to the telegraph and the other to the stern of the ram which then starting on tore down great lengths of line, breaking insulators and poles and finally the line itself. Bonnett Carre was reached and passed. L. J. Hebard operator there discovered at sunrise that the line north was down though he thought it but an accident, for want of reason for suspecting something else. He promptly sent a repairer to mend it. While the repairer was away, a soldier reported to Captain Kimberly commanding the Post, that the "Webb" had passed. Kimberly was about telegraphing the fact to New Orleans when Colonel Everett rode up, walking his horse for fear of creating an excitement, and being informed that the line was "O K" to New Orleans, talked about arresting the man who brought the news, which the Colonel seemed not to believe, and rode away. Ten minutes later the Colonel sent to know if the

wire was all right yet. The operator replied that he had just had New Orleans, but soon after the *line was cut.* This was indeed a calamity. The report *was* true and there must be a sacrifice. The punishment of an officer involved a trial; not so of a telegrapher. Everett reported that but for the absence of the operator, the "passing of the Webb would have been communicated before wires were cut." Hebard was discharged. He had been absent a few minutes only and was near the office, returning when sent for. He was in the office long enough to have telegraphed a number of messages before the line went down. If we possess all the facts in the case and we have the statements of three witnesses, the department superintendent made a great mistake in allowing Everett's request. The ram reached New Orleans about noon, flying the United States flag at half mast. Her true character however was discovered and Admiral Thatcher sent the tender, Holly Hock, carrying two guns after her. The fleet had not steam up. On sped the Webb; New Orleans grew excited. The telegraph was again sought. Forts Jackson and Philips must be warned or there will be another privateer on the high seas. William Mathews operated at Fort Jackson, no one at Philips, and Mathews who had been employed since the fall of Mobile and was probably in the service of some Confederate States telegraph company prior thereto "*could not be raised.*" Quarantine office five miles north was resorted to. ii, ii, ii, said Operator VonEye. "Take a message from General Banks to the commanders at Jackson and Philips and deliver in person," said S. B. Fairchild the chief operator in New Orleans. The message was sent. Von Eye, crossing the river, took to horse and rode as did Paul Revere, from "Charlestown shore" just about ninety years before. Forts Jackson and Philips were duly warned and officers with rockets sent up to Quarantine to announce the passing of the Webb. She never came. There was a "Richmond" in the (naval) field. This gunboat passed Quarantine for New Orleans that morning. Near English Bend the watch called out "Steamer ahead with stars and bars," for the Webb had donned her own clothes. There was no escape and the Webb was run ashore and blown up. Her crew taking to the swamps. Mathews

served fifteen days in all and it seems was justly discharged. General Banks complimented VonEye.

About Vicksburg the exchange of prisoners was regularly proceeding under the cartel. The Federal camp was four miles out from the city and the Confederate at Big Black River bridge. Operators Pettit and Ludwig, who were captured at Athens, Ala., in September, 1864, and imprisoned in Cahaba were sent to the parole camp for exchange, in March, 1865, but instead of their being released, the wire was repaired from Vicksburg to the bridge, and Pettit stationed at the rebel head-quarters of exchange and Ludwig in the Federal camp. This was March 21, 1865, and while the war was in full blast. It is an interesting and doubtless isolated fact, that thus by mutual consent, Confederate and Union head-quarters were linked together, and *both* offices worked by Union operators. Exchanges were greatly facilitated by this means, but it was a great hardship to both of the operators, who had suffered greatly from chronic diarrhœa. Indeed Pettit worked most of the time in a hammock. Exposure here produced a relapse, which, while it nearly destroyed, saved his life. He and Ludwig were to go North with two thousand, one hundred other exchanged prisoners on the steamer Sultana; this relapse prevented Pettit's going, and General Dana refused leave to Ludwig, as he was greatly needed to assist Samuel Cochrane, the telegraph manager of the Vicksburg district, who was slowly dying, when he should have gone North to recuperate. The Sultana blew up at two A. M., April 28, near Memphis and took fire. About *fourteen hundred* home-sick soldiers were thereby killed or drowned. May 9, Pettit and Ludwig were exchanged. I find the following official endorsement concerning these operators:

HEAD-QUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF MISSISSIPPI,
VICKSBURG, June 2, 1865.

* * The men named within, Pettit and Ludwig, were of great service here at a time when it was impossible to have done without them. * * Ludwig was detained here when Pettit left, by order of Major General Dana, there being no telegraph operators to be had, and rendered very important services in building the line to Jackson. * * (Signed) G. K. WARREN,
Major General.

Dana ordered Ludwig to construct a line from the bridge to Clinton, which, aided by negro soldiers and Irishmen, he did, over the hills, bridgeless streams, the silent battle field of Champion Hills and through heavy timber, in a scorching sun. The obstacles were so great and Ludwig so weak that Dana, growing impatient, sent one hundred more soldiers, and later also Louis H. Korty, operator, who had just arrived from Mobile. The soldiers reached Clinton just as the line was being extended into that place. This was in the evening of May 19. The circuit was thus completed *via* Meridian to Mobile. Let us now follow Korty, who on that day reached Black River Bridge. He left the river in company with Captain Turner, of a New York regiment. Before starting, they had discussed the propriety of only two persons traveling by night over a country, infested by guerrillas and other bad characters, who had left their commands with their arms, without waiting to be paroled. Many of their homes were in the trans-Mississippi Department, and there E. Kirby Smith commanded, and was determined to fight to the last extremity; thither also, others, moved by the same unconquerable will, were tending, and hence it *was* a dangerous ride that Korty and Turner proposed, but being badgered by others who thought the two dared not attempt it, they mounted their horses and were lost in the darkness of that silent night, to brood over imaginary evils as they slowly picked their way. Turner had fought over this ground, and was wounded at the battle of Champion Hills, which locality, about midnight, as the moon escaped the clouds, the two reached safely. Turner's adventures hereabouts, which he related *en route*, the apprehensions of evil, the wrecks of caissons, pieces of shells; the hour, the loneliness, the silence; but above all, the whitened bones of slain animals, the rude burial boards announcing the names of the fallen, and other evidences of mortal conflict upon which the moon's pale light gave a sepulchral hue—these things, at a time when "graveyards yawn," strung the nerves of the riders to the highest tension.

After contemplating the scene a little, they pressed on through thick woods, and on emerging, were suddenly completely surrounded by eight or ten men coming out of a thicket with drawn revolvers, calling out, "Get down, you Yankee

- - - - - - ———. " One caught Korty's bridle, and another leaped for Turner's, but the latter, who was remarkably brave, opened on his assailant and others with his revolver. Thus began the second battle of Champion Hills, with greater odds against the Unionists than Grant had against Pemberton. Before Korty could draw his weapon, his horse, a spirited, unmanageable animal, reared up and, dashing headlong, broke from the grasp of the bushman and was out of range with its rider. But Turner was fighting *alone;* however he was fighting gallantly, emptying two revolvers and shooting at least two of the assailants, and then leaving unharmed amid a shower of bullets. Korty, in the meantime, had checked his horse and was returning to Turner's aid, when the latter rode up. Their first idea was to press on to Clinton, but then they heard the neighing of a horse, and concluding that the men were mounted (perhaps familiar with the country) and would pursue, they determined to take an elevated position among the hills, where, tying their horses, they threw up a barricade, confidently expecting to be besieged. If so, they determined to re-baptise this historic ground. But the guerrillas, discovering the preparations, or for some other reason, let them alone. Waiting, watching, listening, until sunrise, made a long night of it, but at last, daylight came, and the two entered Clinton in safety. At breakfast, a professor, who before the war conducted a female seminary there, related the circumstances of his finding the bodies of two men who had been murdered two nights before, near where Korty and Turner were attacked.

Samuel D. Cochrane manager of Vicksburg District caught cold from exposure in building a line to Black River Bridge early in March, from which he never entirely recovered and July 1 died in the harness at his post and, wrote James K. Gullihur who succeeded him, "received a charity burial" July 2. Thus another offering was made, and he, one of the best and most devoted. *Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori*, is a pretty expression, but one which no man ever uttered from experience. It is a staple ingredient in Fourth of July oratory and monumental design. Next to volunteering one's wife's relations, is sacrificing others less deserving thereof, on their country's altars. I never heard that "sweet and glorious" expression on a battle

field and my manuscripts do not show that it was used in Cahaba, Libby or Andersonville. It may have been the consolation of the sixteen thousand Federals who lie buried about Vicksburg. It may have been uttered there by operators Cochrane and Booth, but the *Government not having provided headstones for any of its dead operators*, no such sentiment is preserved to their credit.

On the 9th day of May the line was finished from Mobile to East Pascagoula where Benjamin Dorsey opened an office in General Twiggs' house. Two days later Israel A. Sherman, operator at Spring Hill, on that line (John R. Dixon having succeeded him at General Canby's) pretended to be General Wade Hampton's operator *en route* with Hampton's cavalry for Texas, pursued by Grierson. C. B. Smith the manager of Mobile District military telegraphs, hastily reported Sherman's representations, which ought not to have deceived anybody and Sherman was ordered to report *in arrest* at Mobile. One would naturally suppose that his written report aided by Captain Fuller's recommendation for leniency and Smith's request to withdraw the charge and re-employ Sherman, would have prevailed, but Canby ordered him "discharged" with "permission to go North." The following is Sherman's report:

MOBILE, ALA., May 11, 1865.

LIEUTENANT COLONEL C. T. CHRISTENSEN:

Colonel:—At about one o'clock this P. M. in my office at Spring Hill, the line being at rest, I commenced a conversation with the operator at Mobile, and without any malicious intent whatever, I represented myself to be a rebel operator with Wade Hampton. After talking in this manner for not more than ten minutes I disavowed the truth of the statement and explained the conversation, as the operator in Mobile will testify. I, by this, prevented, as I supposed, it from going any farther than intended — simply a joke upon the operator. Indeed the conversation was of such a nature, that it was believed for an instant, is surprising to me. The Pascagoula operator discredited it from the beginning, making laughable remarks. If it had been really malicious any person conversant with telegraphy can explain to you, that I could have very easily avoided disclosing my name, and thus have escaped detection. Knowing that hostilities in this district had ceased, that Wade

Hampton had surrendered; that no cavalry from his command could under the most favorable circumstances have reached this section of the country: that a rebel operator would not have held any such conversation as mine and that my writing in telegraphic characters has a peculiarity which is easily recognized, I am very much astonished and I need not say pained that it was believed and that it has resulted thus, especially after my prompt disavowal, and as it was done in perfect innocence, unconscious of any serious result; I respectfully, but most earnestly ask that all proceedings be dropped and that I be restored to duty or allowed to resign and go North.

Early in the war, Jesse H. Bunnell, a great wit, very young, and so small that he had to sit on a stool to reach the instrument (in Pittsburgh office, I believe), perpetrated a joke on Wheeling newspapers, to the effect that a great naval disaster had occurred to the Unionists off the Rip Raps. Of course Jesse was dismissed as he ought to have been, but offers of employment came from all quarters. It was one of those cases where the employer *had* to discharge, even if he immediately re-employed the malefactor elsewhere at advanced wages.

In the Confederacy a cruel joke was inflicted by an operator near Selma, who telegraphed West that Chattanooga had been captured. This was when the Disunion army was on Mission Ridge. Confederate scrip and spirits went up with Southern hats and huzzas, but they fell deeper than before. This imposition provoked the following message:

JACKSON, MISS., January 23, 1864.

TO MERIDIAN OFFICE:

Your attention is called to the fact that Mr. ——— operator at ——— who sent us that bogus despatch about Chattanooga, is debarred from all courtesies of the profession on the lines west of Meridian. Messages from or to him must be paid, and all messages signed "operator" from ——— must not be sent free until you ascertain that such messages are not from ———. I shall require a strict observance of this, and you ought to be as sensitive on this subject as myself and require no reminders.

(Signed) D. FLANERY, *Supt.*

But a Federal brigadier general (Merrell), whose head-quarters were in Macon, Mo., tried his hand at this game early in

the war. Frank S. VanValkenburg was Merrell's operator and the General, not having much else to do, tried to learn the art of telegraphy. Having learned the alphabet, he sometimes practiced on the (N. M.) line, pretending to be a rebel operator. The only harm done was to interfere with the regular business. R. C. Clowry was chief operator in St. Louis, and J. B. Clarke, train despatcher at Macon (R. R.) office, and Charles York, assistant. Clarke reported the cause of the trouble to Clowry and it was agreed to repay the General in kind. The next time he came in, Clarke went to the battery room and there telegraphed the General some startling reports that worried him, but it was York who succeeded best. He went to the Hannibal & St. Joseph office and pretending to be Callao operator, told Merrell that there was a large force of rebels marching from south-west on Macon, and would cut the railroad west and south. The General looked at the paper, put on his spec's and looked again. While making sure of what he had read, another report came apparently from Clarence, twelve miles the other side, to the effect that a large force was moving from the east, destroying the railroad, to capture Macon. It was now time for action. The General sent for his staff; ordered reinforcements of infantry and artillery from Brookfield, and prepared to fight. In due time all came but the rebs. York used to laugh in his sleeve over this, but never dared *know* anything about it.

TRANS-MISSISSIPPI.

This department was all that remained of the Confederacy. Not a hostile force was left on the cis-Mississippi side, for Grant and Sherman had ended the war in the East. General E. K. Smith pleaded with the Disunion governors of Louisiana, Arkansas, Missouri and Texas, to aid him. They were powerless, if not hopeless. Then he addressed his army, to "protract the struggle." An affair, known as the battle of Palmetto Ranche, did occur in Texas, on the 11th of May, but it is only notable in that it was the last combat of the War of the Rebellion. Canby went up Red River to Shreveport. Sheridan came to New Orleans and organized an expedition against Smith, but the forces of the latter disbanded or surrendered, and the war *was over*.

In all of the seceding States, governmental reconstruction

and general pacification were matters of supreme moment The most potent agency in this work of peace, the telegraph, lay flat on the ground for hundreds of miles. Before the rivers could be confidently navigated, before the railroads could be repaired, the telegraphs, by which confidence alone could speedily be restored and reconstruction fairly begun, must be re-established. The work of re-opening telegraphic communication throughout the South, was a great one, and in it the Confederate States and United States telegraphers vied with one another. Their services will receive deserved attention hereafter.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE TELEGRAPH IN VIRGINIA DURING THE LAST CAMPAIGN—GRANT'S ANXIETY.—FIVE FORKS.—GENERAL ASSAULT.—EXPOSURE OF OPERATORS.—LINCOLN AND DAVIS HEAR THE NEWS OF VICTORY AND DEFEAT.—PETERSBURG AND RICHMOND EVACUATED.—LINCOLN VISITS PETERSBURG.—HOW THE NEWS OF THE CAPTURE OF RICHMOND WAS SENT AND RECEIVED—LINCOLN IN RICHMOND.—AN OPERATOR RECEIVES APPLAUSE INTENDED FOR GRANT.—THE PURSUIT OF LEE.—SAILORS CREEK.—FARMVILLE.—APPOMATTOX.—HOW THE NEWS OF THE SURRENDER OF LEE'S ARMY WAS SENT AND RECEIVED.—THE NEWS OF LINCOLN'S ASSASSINATION.—CAPTURE OF THE ASSASSIN.—LINCOLN'S STORIES.—JOHNSTON'S SURRENDER.—RECAPITULATION OF THE SERVICE OF THE TELEGRAPH.

At the opening of the new year, there were in Major Eckert's department alone one hundred and eleven operators and about the same number of persons employed as builders, repairers, clerks, messengers, orderlies, foremen, teamsters, cooks and battery-men. These operated and maintained about eight hundred miles of telegraphs, centering at the capital of the nation. From all fronts in Virginia and intermediate points was daily gathered the news of interest, which, from this focal point, was spread from ocean to ocean. In the War Department were C. A. Tinker, A. B. Chandler, F. Stewart and G. W. Baldwin, exclusively employed in putting up or deciphering telegrams of the greatest moment and secrecy, from the commanders in the various departments and many minor officers. There were also in that office, telegraphers, some of whom have since been eminently successful as they were notably faithful in those stirring head-quarters of civil war. George C. Maynard, T. A. Laird, George A. Low, J. A. L. McKenna, J. N. Bentley, J. H. Dwight, William E. Kettles and W. J. Bodell were there.

On the line to Winchester, *via* Harpers Ferry, were D. J. Ludwig, H. P. Bull, J. Minnehann, W. W. Shock, J. J. Sabin, George J. Lawrence, J. D. Flynn, R. R. McCaine, J. H. McCaine and S. C. Holbrook.

On the eastern shore of Maryland line to Cherrystone, were M. V. B. Buell, chief operator; W. T. VanGesel, J. W. Winthrup, C. R. Roberts, George T. Kay, L. J. Blades, C. H. Lounsberry, H. R. Browne, J. W. Boyd, W. A. Dunn, H. P. Darlington and George E. Cromwell.

Other operators, variously stationed north of Fort Monroe, were John Horner, at New York City; E. W. Culgen, at Pittsburgh; J. F. Stevens, at Cincinnati; C. C. Northrup, H. H. Atwater, D. C. Aughinbaugh, H. H. Bishop, George B. Davis, John W. Carver, A. F. Childs, Richard Powers, W. L. Ives, A. G. Hancock, W. S. Maynard; and on the Fort Monroe and City Point wire, George D. Sheldon, chief; John D. Tinney, A. G. Safford, Thomas Morrison, R. J. Murphy, C. A. Mixer, M. S. Andrews, H. D. Frank, J. E. O'Brien, V. H. Wells, T. Q. Waterhouse, and C. A. Homan.

With the armies in the field were W. K. Applebaugh, W. B. Wood and Ed. Schermerhorn, Twenty-fourth Corps; W. H. Wilson and E. W. Mason, Twenty-fifth Corps; P. H. Nunan, and James H. Glazier, Fifth Corps; D. E. Rand, and S. K. Rupley, Second Corps; A. C. Snyder and H. D. Franks, Ninth Corps; J. D. Thurston, W. N. Embree and J. J. Carroll, Sixth Corps; in February, at head-quarters Army of the Potomac, A. H. Caldwell, James Caldwell and Richard Graham; at head-quarters Army of the James, commanded by General Ord, J. H. Emerick, J. H. Nichols, F. W. Davis, M. A. Huyck, Charles H. Mixer; at General Sheridan's was R. R. McCaine.

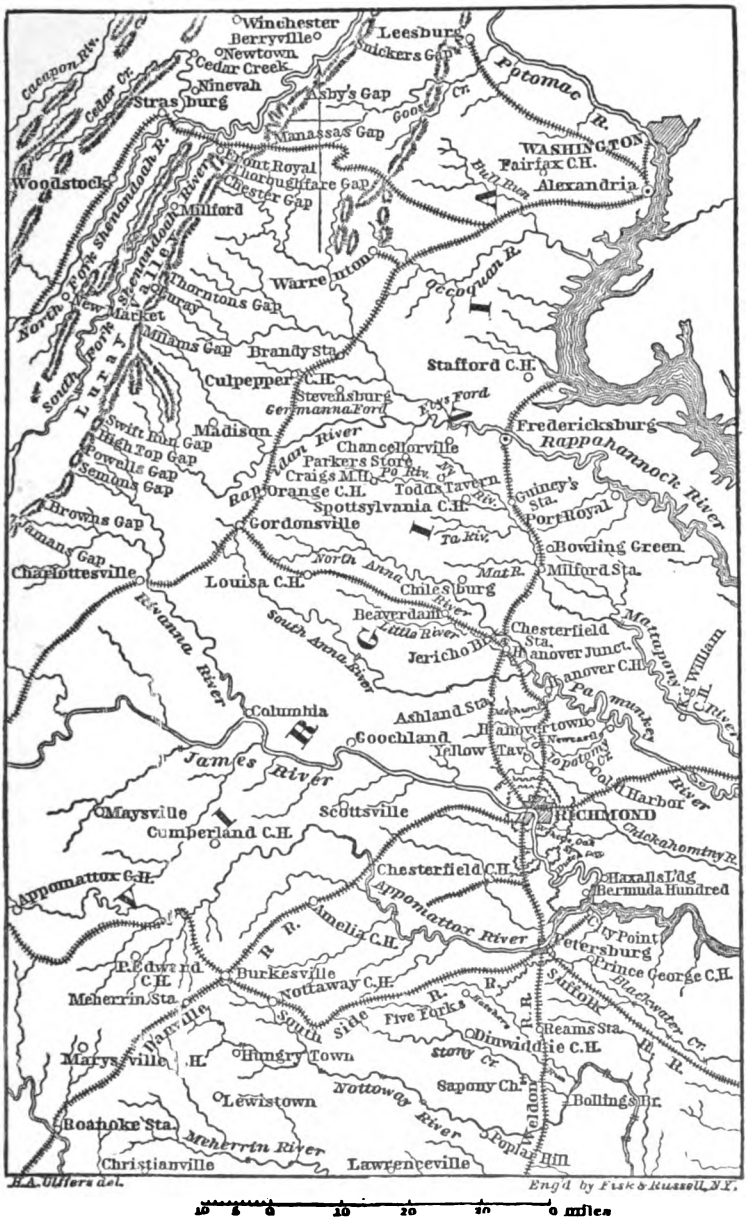
At various stations about Petersburg and Bermuda Hundred, were J. A. Munson, J. J. Mulligan, L. M. Painter, J. H. Sheridan, R. D. Williams, C. D. Hammond, T. N. Loucks, R. C. Laverty, F. C. Long and James M. Allen.

Lee assaulted Fort Steadman in front of Petersburg, March 25, meeting at first with splendid success, even capturing the Fort, but the Union soldiers re-formed, captured over two thousand of the enemy, re-took their positions and gained others, suffering a total loss, however, of nine hundred men.

Badeau, whose opportunities for obtaining the figures were extraordinary, places Grant's available force in March, 1865, at one hundred and eleven thousand men to Lee's seventy thousand. Sheridan was brought from the White House and his available troopers, increased by others, now numbered twelve thousand. Leaving twenty odd thousand men in the trenches, Grant projected Sheridan to Dinwiddie Court House, with instructions to strike out north-westerly against the South Side Railroad, now the great hope of Lee, and without which he could not feed his army in Petersburg. At the same time the Fifth Corps, Warren's, was sent to the Union left to within about four miles of Dinwiddie Court House, when the Second Corps joined it on the right. Other corps also took part in the general movement of swinging to the left, thus greatly attenuating the opposing lines.

At this time Kautz' cavalry was to the right of Weitzel in the suburbs of Richmond, and from there to near Dinwiddie Court House, were opposing forces ready to receive, if not to give battle. It was doubtless the longest stretch of battle array ever beheld on the American continent—probably thirty miles in extent. All night long Grant watched the operations by telegraph. Every few minutes he penned an order to Meade or Ord, or a telegram to Lincoln or others. All night long Meade was busy ordering by telegraph, dispositions for the morrow. Emerick, chief operator in O'Brien's place (the Army of the James), had recently ordered fifteen miles more of field wire and Gulick came with it and took charge of a building party, which was to push on to Richmond as soon as that city fell. The line already extended from Bermuda Hundred to Varina Landing, head-quarters Army of the James, Twenty-fifth and Twenty-fourth Army Corps and Kautz' head-quarters, the latter about six miles from Richmond, where John A. Torrence was operator.

Sheridan and Warren met some resistance the first day. Next day the roads being almost impassable and the rain continuing, much advance was impracticable. Lee by the morning of the thirty-first, had massed eighteen thousand men against Warren's corps, and while they were being effectively hurled against the devoted Fifth, Sheridan pushed on to Five Forks; then they fell upon Sheridan, cutting his force in two and driv-



THEATRE ABOUT RICHMOND AND OTHER POINTS IN VIRGINIA.

ing him back to Dinwiddie. But Sheridan, though driven, resumed the offensive with considerable success, and re-united his columns. That night Grant's head-quarters were at Dabney's saw mill, southwest of Petersburg. It is said, that that (thirty-first) was the most anxious night that Grant ever experienced—that night, which brought Sheridan back to Dinwiddie, Warren to a standstill after a partial rout; that night, so dark and with roads so muddy, when the results and the elements were discouraging; when Warren was reported cruelly derelict, and officers of great reputation were recommending a return to the trenches of Petersburg; the third night since starting out on the series of hazardous movements pregnant with overwhelming joy or deepest grief—what would it not have been to the great chieftain, had he been dependent alone upon staff officers or miry roads, for reports all along the line. Sleep came not to Dabney's Mills that night, where Ed. Schermerhorn and R. C. Laverty were busy transmitting or receiving orders and important messages. Probably John D. Tinney was there, also engaged in cipher work, for Beckwith had reported to President Lincoln at Grant's, and accompanied him to City Point, but before leaving, the President visited head-quarter's operators and made many inquiries about their work, manifesting here, as he had ever done in Washington, a sincere interest in their welfare. On leaving, he was careful to shake hands with all the telegraphers at Grant's. Sheridan's operator, McCaine, alone was beyond the telegraphic circuit which continually re-echoed from Warren's to Kautz', the "all is well," so dear to a commander whose energies and abilities are so severely taxed, as were Grant's during those dark hours that preceded the dawn of his and the Nation's final triumph. Meade was no less active. He despatched suggestive messages to Grant, mandatory ones to Warren, Humphreys and others, and inquiring telegrams to all points. The efforts of the telegraphers during that night so to aid the officers that perfect order and assurance might come with the opening of the day, may never be half told. They are locked in the vault of death, to which no man alive knows the combination. There lie the two Caldwells, Tinney, Mason, Sheridan and McCaine; others are scattered, and can not be reached.

New offices were being opened and reliefs required, wherefore, by General Ord's order, Emerick reduced his force north of the James, sending Snow, McKenna and Nichols to the active front.

April 1, General Sheridan, now commanding his own troops and Warren's corps about the Forks, succeeded in defeating Lee's right, capturing nearly six thousand prisoners, and connecting with the main army by moving eastwardly. It was a great victory, and was proudly hailed by the entire North, for it opened a certain way to an open attack upon the enemy with assured success, or else he would be harassed in a general retreat, after giving up the Confederate capital. Lee's separation from Johnston was now secure. Grant spent no more over-solicitous nights. He telegraphed Wright, Parke and Ord to assault at daybreak. With dawn, the great guns opened, all along the line; the various corps moved forward, some very successful, others partially so; but when the day was done, Lee had failed to restore his lines, and was being hemmed in.

Some of the telegraph operators were at times greatly exposed this day, but all escaped unhurt. At the Rainey House, at the intersection of the Boydtown plank road, Humphrey's head-quarters office, where Rand and Rupley operated, may be said to have been on the field of battle. A battery in action was in front of the house firing over the soldiers' heads. This house was not over five hundred feet from the battle array. Humphreys sent the telegraph line guard to the rear, so as not to attract too much attention. Of course all sorts of missiles fell hereabouts. It not infrequently happens that the greatest danger is just behind the battle line, as in battle overshots are more frequent than undershots, and either may outnumber those that are rightly aimed.

Every office has a ground connection for use in case the wire breaks on either side. That at the Rainey House was a sword, which was left in its place when Rand moved to the new head-quarters at ten o'clock that night. Rupley had gone forward with Humphreys early in the day.

All day Lincoln waited at City Point, the news from Sheridan, Meade, Ord and Weitzel. Grant frequently telegraphed, and every additional message brought news of fresh victories.

At about eleven o'clock A. M., Davis, the President of the Confederacy, received his first information of the approaching crisis. It recommended that arrangements be made for evacuating Richmond that night, with a view of concentrating near the Danville road. The enemy now, had but one wire route intact out of Petersburg, and that led to Richmond, but doubtless there were fortification lines, as Colonel Taylor, of Lee's staff, has written that the Federals having broken through a portion of the lines, "General Lee communicated to the authorities at Richmond his intention of evacuating his lines that night. * * During the whole day he was engaged in issuing orders and sending despatches by couriers and by telegraph, in preparation for this event. Early in the forenoon, while the telegraph operator was working his instrument at head-quarters under the supervision of the staff officer, charged with the duty of transmitting these orders, a shell came crashing through the house and the operator declared himself unable longer to work his instrument. He was ordered to detach it, and as the staff officer and the operator emerged from the house, they with difficulty escaped capture at the hands of the Federal infantry, which just then advanced up and drove away the battery of artillery, which had been placed in position around the house to assist in delaying the advance of the enemy." Lee's head-quarters, thus captured were two miles from Petersburg in Mr. Turnbull's house.

Twelve thousand prisoners were captured from Lee that day and more soldiers cut off. It was two P. M. before the disaster was publicly known in Richmond. Davis and his cabinet, except one officer, secretly escaped by train at eight. Before the public in Richmond knew that ere another night the Union troops would be in possession of that city, it is probable that Grant's first assuring messages to Lincoln had reached the great marts of trade throughout the Northern States.

Orders went forth that night for all of Lee's troops to concentrate at Amelia Court House about fifty miles west of Petersburg.

It was an anxious night throughout the National lines. Would Lee escape or compel an assault more terrible and desperate than any the army had ever yet made? For unless he fled the assault would follow. Between three and four A. M of

the third, it became apparent that Lee had withdrawn, and a little after four o'clock the National troops took possession of Petersburg unopposed. As soon as word could be gotten to the nearest office the fact was telegraphed generally. Grant sent the news to Lincoln. It was too good to keep and at breakfast time in the cities, the newsboys were doubtless crying their extras. Many of the operators were able to visit the city. Schermerhorn and Laverty at Grant's could not leave, but sent an orderly in after tobacco. He soon returned with enough for all hands, for more than a month. Doran, chief of construction, now, was the busiest man in the telegraph service. It was his duty to connect telegraphically the various corps advancing to intercept and overcome Lee. Fortunately most of the poles on the South Side Road were standing and upon these he hastily strung his wire. At three P. M. of the third Grant's head-quarters were ten miles out from Petersburg and at midnight the first message to Petersburg from Grant was sent, addressed to President Lincoln who had come down on the third and visited that city. The line along the South Side railway was restored as rapidly as the troops advanced, excepting always Sheridan, who was a long way out at the start and whose troops were mostly mounted.

On the north side of the James, Weitzel was equally alert and active. At 8: 30 A. M. he entered Richmond which was in the hands of the mob and largely in flames. The roughs there were brutal and fiendish and the better classes so frightened that the advent of the hated Yankees was hailed as a protection, which indeed it proved to be. Add to riot, burglary, to burglary, arson, to arson, murder, to murder that which is more shameful; multiply these until a city of a hundred thousand people is terror stricken and you have Richmond during the night that neither the stars and bars nor the stars and stripes represented anything there, and do you wonder that law and order in any command was hailed in quiet thanksgiving? W. K. Applebaugh accompanied Weitzel and was the first Union operator to enter that city. Passing up the main street all were compelled by the heat from the burning buildings to protect their faces with the capes of their coats.

Palmer Gulick and E. A. Eckert and their party hurriedly

constructed their line along the Osborne pike to Richmond; City Point office connected Fortress Monroe and Wilmington, Del., and the War Department, Washington, and once again, but by a new and untried route, Richmond was brought into the great telegraphic union as well as into the political union of the States. Emerick could hardly keep his operators within bounds when they heard of the fall of Richmond, they were so wild with joy; so were all—the army pressing after Lee,—the troops about Petersburg, City Point, Bermuda Hundred, and on to Richmond. A reckless, devil-may-care-now, spirit of comfortably exhilarating, of delightfully intoxicating joy, prevailed and overcame all desires for work, even in furtherance of duty, for the country *was safe now*, even if slight neglects were permitted. Nevertheless the operators remained at their posts and did all that was needful. Emerick hurried up Gulick and before night, the line to the city of Richmond was complete, but only for a short time. In that hour the country was electrified by the intelligence that the Confederate capital, now re-possessed by the Federals, was telegraphically connected with the National head-quarters. But before the circuit was completed over the Osborne road, a mounted courier, who had been to General Butler's head-quarters with Weitzel's telegram and there discovered that the operator had moved on toward Richmond, rode in hot haste to the office at Twenty-fourth Army Corps head-quarters. For four long years the Northern people had been waiting, watching, and praying, while brave ones were fighting, for the reduction of Richmond. This orderly carried the glorious news of its fall. No wonder he spurred his horse to its utmost speed.

"Each muscle and vein
Of his charger knots with the nervous strain,
As with head stretched forward and streaming mane,
It bends to the pace, its nostrils red,
And flecks of foam on its breast and head,
Galloping free, with the ringing sound
Of the iron hoofs on the solid ground."

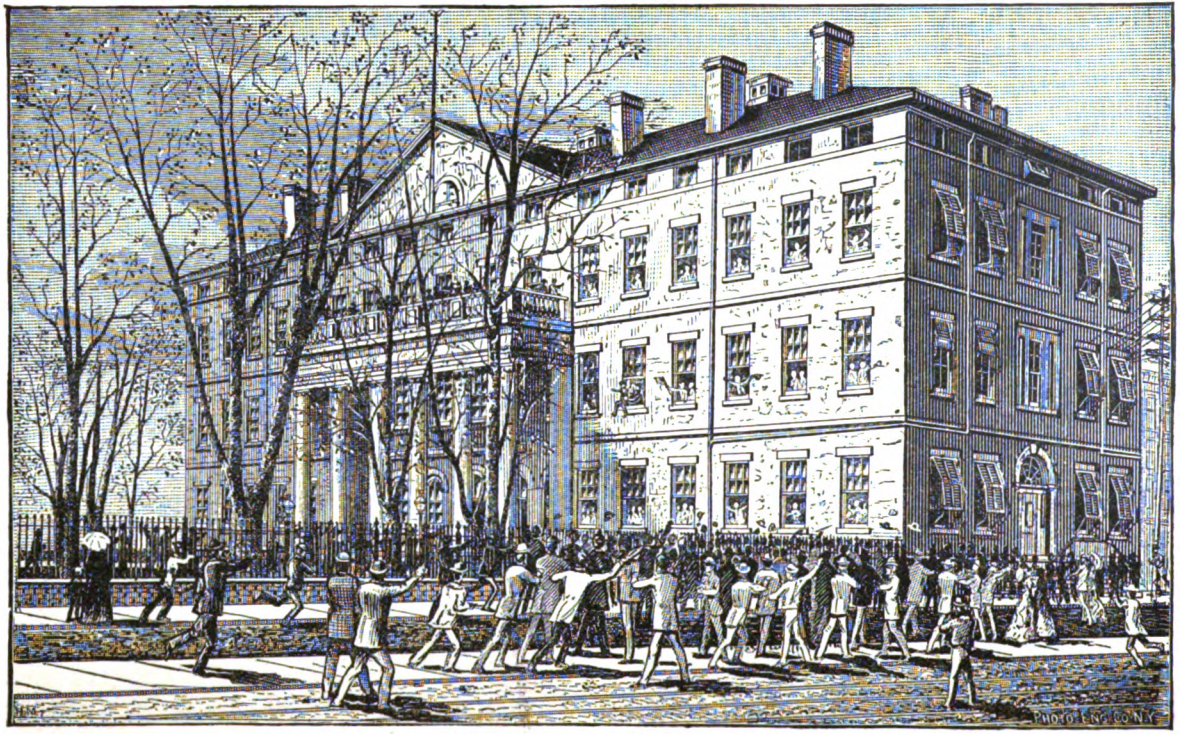
W. B. Wood, operator, was about to close his office and move on, when he espied the horseman, and thinking from his furious riding that possibly he bore important messages, Wood awaited his approach. Operators Dealey and Homan were on

duty at Fortress Monroe, which office being quickly informed of the fall of Richmond, connected the War Department office direct, so that a copy of the telegram might be taken there while it was being received at the Fortress for Norfolk. Little Willie E. Kettles, a precocious boy and an expert operator in Di (War Department) office — he who had worked the line to Harpers Ferry and Winchester while an engagement was progressing at those points, and Lincoln, Stanton and Halleck were sitting by, eagerly listening to each word as it was read from the instrument, or cautiously suggesting plans of operations that the reports called forth—this boy answered, ii, ii, Di. "Sharpen for Richmond," said Dealey. Then Wood, who was five miles therefrom, called, and Di answered. For about four years Richmond had not been heard in Washington. Wood's office was almost within the limits of the former city, and Di was wild with joy. The following message then came:

RICHMOND, VA., April 3, 1865.

To BRIG. GEN. GEO. F. SHEPLEY,
Military Governor, Norfolk, Va.,
We entered Richmond at eight o'clock this morning.
(Signed) G. WEITZEL, *Brig. Gen. Comdg.*

Bodell was standing by Kettles and no sooner heard the purport of the telegram than he rushed into Eckert's room and told him. Probably no other message was ever received at the National capital, that caused such rejoicing. The surrender of Lee and Johnston created perhaps profounder joy, but not such boisterous pleasure. "I took the message," said Kettles, "the Lord only knows how, and upsetting inkstand and instrument, I hurried to Major Eckert's room, where he or another snatched it and ran to Stanton's office." Charles A. Tinker came into the operating room at the same time, and espying a friend, the only person near, on the broad ground in front, called to him and reported the glorious news, which he was fairly aching to tell somebody. While the other operators were calling up distant offices to spread the glad tidings, Secretary Stanton rushed in and snatching Kettles in his strong arms, actually held him at arm's length out of the window, to the view of the fast gathering crowd which Tinker's friend below, by his uproarious conduct, was drawing.



NEWS OF FALL OF RICHMOND.

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Stanton addressed the crowd a few remarks complimentary to Kettles, and repeated the news of the downfall of the rebel Government, as the capture of Richmond was interpreted. The crowd called on Kettles for a speech, but he was too much disconcerted, and retired amid the loud huzzas of a jubilant multitude. Before Stanton, who was in his shirt-sleeves, retired, and while the tears of joy and gratitude were falling (a strange thing for that man), he said to the operators: "*Boys, I consider the telegraph my right arm, and if ever I can do anything for you, don't hesitate to ask it.*" Below, the exultant crowd was still gathering, and hats flew high in air at the inspiring intelligence. That night the Nation's heart palpitated in pride and rapturous transports. All felt positive at last that a happy ending was in the near future.

Next day the President visited Richmond, and Beckwith, who was a little behind in Grant's carriage which was brought up for the President's use, received loud huzzas from the excited populace as the elegant equipage came rolling up to the house where the President was—the house that Davis had so recently left. "Young man," said Lincoln, with a twinkle in his eye as the operator came up to report, "I am afraid you have been stealing somebody's thunder." While out walking later, Beckwith heard for the first time of the presence of Grant, who, in fact was miles away. It was Grant's thunder that Beckwith had had thrust upon him. This reminds that earlier in the war, while operators Shreffler and E. H. McGintey were off duty in Washington a couple of days, the latter donned the military clothes of his brother-in-law, a colonel and member of Congress, when Shreffler took pains to introduce Colonel McGintey to all his acquaintances.

Schermerhorn and Laverty retired about 1:30, A. M., of the fourth, but on waking about five, were minus their tent in which they had gone to bed. Torrence had come over the James, too, and while they slept soundly, he had removed the tent to his own office, which he established further on. That night Grant's head-quarters were twenty-seven miles from Petersburg, and Doren's men built a loop from the main line on the South Side railroad to head-quarters. The promptness with which the telegraph reached Grant's camp pleased him and he so expressed himself.

Messages to Lincoln, Stanton, and probably Sherman, *via* Fort Monroe, were soon on their way. The next night Laverty opened office at Burksville Junction—his partner coming up shortly after, in an ambulance. Here they remained until the afternoon of the seventh, when Torrence came up and they went on toward Farmville.

In the afternoon of the fourth, Sheridan was in front of Lee, who was at Amelia C. H. At the Jettersville telegraph office, five miles from Amelia C. H., an unsent telegram was found, signed by Lee, ordering two hundred thousand rations from Danville. Sheridan promptly sent it, probably by his operator McCaine, to Burksville, whence it was telegraphed as prepared by Lee, who must have been surprised at Sheridan's appearance in his front so quickly; but Sheridan did not get the rations. On the sixth, Lee's army was nearly surrounded. Sheridan manœuvered the troops in the battle of Sailors Creek, capturing seven thousand of the enemy. Other forces on other quarters had taken two thousand more. This was glorious news for Lincoln and the people at the North. That night, however, Lee eluded Ord in his front, and reached Farmville when Ord struck him in rear and flank. Humphrey's Second Corps checked the enemy's progress during the day, but Lee's forces gained two inconsequential victories with portions of his troops.

That night, Grant, at Farmville, called on Lee to surrender. Lee asked terms the next morning, and Grant said he insisted only upon the prisoners being disqualified for taking up arms against the government, until exchanged. This vigorous march was cruel to man and beast, but it was skillful war. The operators, less used to exercise than most others with the army, were severely taxed. They stole snatches of sleep as best they could, and pushed on. The movements were so often changed, and in such winding ways and counter directions, that a field telegraphic system was utterly impracticable, but the main line to Burksville Junction, and thence to Farmville and on toward Appomattox, was pushed vigorously. It often served for field orders. Schermerhorn was on duty at Grant's on the night of the eighth; Lee had not surrendered, nor had Grant relaxed his hold. Sheridan's cavalry again encountered the advance, this time at Appomattox. Infantry came up, and again the enemy

was cut off. After a sharp little fight, a truce was called, which ended in the surrender of Lee's army, now numbering twenty-seven thousand, five hundred and sixteen.

Grant at 4: 30 P. M. of the ninth wrote a telegram to Stanton saying;

> General Lee surrendered the army of Northern Virginia this afternoon on terms proposed by myself. The accompanying additional correspondence will show the conditions fully

These allowed each officer to retain his side arms, and all were permitted to take their horses home with them. Laverty and Schermerhorn were called to General Grant's presence and the foregoing message and others were given them with directions to find the wire. They soon lost the way but quickly righting their error they reached Appomattox station to which point the wire was already repaired, and selected for their office a box car laden with bags of sand intended for defensive purposes. As soon as a ground wire was laid the operators called Petersburg office. The operator on duty there was prompt to reply. After telling the glorious news, Petersburg connected the War Department direct. Congratulatory replies from the President and Secretary of War were received at near five o'clock. So quickly was this good work accomplished, that Grant was both surprised and pleased. Within two hours after the surrender, the line was extended to Grant's at Appomattox Court House. The intoxicating news spread with lightning rapidity all over the land. Bells were rung, cannon fired, rockets sent up, bonfires built and meetings held. From that box-car at the station in the midst of the armies, had been forwarded the few words that made tears of joy gather in the eyes of millions, who now saw the clouds break entirely away, leaving a clear sky for the great future. No one doubted the messenger. No one said it was a stock-broker's ruse and no one suspected the telegraph of infidelity. There was nothing to mar the victory except the loss of the ten thousand killed, wounded and missing since the 29th of March when the movement was first begun. It was the last great sacrifice of the war; that dreadful war in which the Federals lost by disease and wounds nearly three hundred thousand men and their erring brethren buried, perhaps as

many more; besides whom four hundred thousand more were wounded, but not fatally — one million American citizens — what misery ! ! !

Measures were at once taken to repair the telegraph lines leading west and south. An office was opened at Lynchburg April 16, at Danville April 21. Caldwell, chief operator, and Doren, superintendent of construction and those under them deserve, says Eckert, "great credit for the skill and energy displayed in establishing and maintaining communication with the advance of the army."

On the night of the fifteenth, as Laverty about midnight entered operator Sheridan's office at Burksville, after a walk of eighteen miles to repair a break in the line, he heard the instrument spell out those dreadful words, "President Lincoln was shot at Ford's theater." Meade's operator on duty near by, had just copied them for that officer. Wilson, operator with General Wright of the Sixth Corps was startled by the same despatch; he too copied it, his hand trembling so that he could hardly write. This was handed his partner Embree, but not a word was lisped until Meade officially announced it to his officers. At General Gibbon's request Nichols and Snow with sixteen cavalrymen restored the line from Appomattox to Lynchburg. There they found seven Confederate States operators and there on their arrival they heard the sad news. C. D. Hammond in Richmond received a message for General Ord announcing the assassination of the President. It was kept from the people all that day. The Secretary of War ordered the arrest and confinement in Libby prison, of Judge Campbell and all paroled Confederate States officers, but at Ord's solicitation the order was countermanded. On the seventeenth the news went over the parole line from near Vicksburg, the Union headquarters where J. F. Ludwig operated, to the Confederates on the Big Black, where J. E. Pettit was stationed. John Q. Mason at Cairo had received and forwarded it. F. H. Campbell at Chattanooga, first heard of the dreadful tragedy and sent it on to the East, West and South. The author in Nashville, Tenn., heard the direful news on opening his office at headquarters and stepping into an adjoining room where General

Thomas sat reading his mail, informed that grand soldier. "Is that so, Mr. Plum?" is all he could say. At Webster, W. Va., D. W. Smith half asleep heard, "The President died at 7:22 A. M.," which startled him into a wretched wakefulness. Grant and party were at Bloodgood's restaurant in Philadelphia. It was near eleven P. M. the fourteenth. Somehow great excitement preceded and foreshadowed the evil news. An operator edged his way to the General with the message announcing the fate of Lincoln. The crowd groaned, but in suffused tears and with choking hearts could hardly more than say, "Isn't it awful?" Grant's face was like marble, perhaps his lips were a little more firmly compressed, but no other change was observable as he read. Not a sound escaped his lips, but his wife sitting by, roused him from his silent, thoughtful self, long enough to reply, "The President has been assassinated." During the rest of the journey to Burlington, N. J., whither he was bound, but few words were spoken. The following telegram however indicated Stanton's further apprehensions:

WAR DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, April 14, 1865.

S. H. BECKWITH:

The Secretary wishes you to see that a pilot engine is sent in front of your train both in going to and coming from Burlington. Do not inform the General of this as he may consider it unnecessary. (Signed) THOS. T. ECKERT,

Assistant Secretary.

Just as General Sherman was about to enter his railroad car at Raleigh for near Durham Station, where he was to meet General Johnston to discuss terms of Johnston's capitulation, the operator at Raleigh whose office was up-stairs in the depot-building ran down and reported that he was that moment receiving a cipher message from Morehead City which the General ought to see. Being soon translated and brought to Sherman it revealed the fact that Lincoln had been assassinated. "Dreading the effect of such a message at that critical instant of time," writes Sherman in his "Memoirs," "I asked the operator if any one besides himself had seen it; he answered no. I then bade him not to reveal the contents by word or look till I came back, which I proposed to do that same afternoon." And

so on throughout the Union the news spread, and the nation so recently raised in ecstasies of delight at the prospects of peace was bowed down as one parent viewing the corpse of a beloved son. The nation had by slow degrees come to look upon Lincoln as its strength and support, and now that his broad and charitable mind was most needed, it was suddenly disenthroned forever. Fully five thousand offices then in telegraphic connection responded before noon "too bad, too bad!" Thousands upon thousands of extras advised the general public, and business ceased as by a command from the Almighty. Men, women and children, ready now more than ever to do homage to Lincoln, joined in the universal requiem of sobs. Perhaps in the Providence of God, the time had come when it was necessary to temper bitterness with sorrow. The arm that pointed death at the nation's head struck down in an instant more animosities than were unedged by any one act since the wounds on Calvary. His life was likened unto that of a few of the greatest and best, but the influence of his death could be compared to that of no human being alive, dying or dead.

"Within fifteen minutes after the murder," says Detective Baker, "the wires were severed entirely round the city, excepting only a secret wire for Government uses, which leads to Old Point. I am told that, by this wire the Government reached the fortifications around Washington, first telegraphing all the way to Old Point, and then back to the outlying forts." Be this as it may, it is certain that but little of the dreadful news went North that night. Intense excitement prevailed at the Capital, and the Department wires were frequently called into requisition. The following telegrams, received by H. H. Atwater, operator at the Navy Yard, will indicate some of the activity that prevailed:

WAR DEPARTMENT, April 14, 1865.

To COMMANDER PARKER:

An attempt has been made this P. M. to assassinate the President and Secretary of State. The parties may escape, or attempt to escape, down the Potomac. J. H. TAYLOR,

Chief of Staff.

NAVY YARD, WASHINGTON, April 14, 1865.

S. NICKERSON, a Vol. Lieut., St. Inegoes:

Send the fastest vessel you have, with the following message, to Commander Parker. T. H. EASTMAN,

Comdr. Potomac Flotilla.

To COMMANDER PARKER:

An attempt has, this evening, been made to assassinate the President and Secretary Seward. The President was shot through the head and Secretary Seward had his throat cut, in his own house. Both are in a very dangerous condition. No further particulars. There is great excitement here. T. H. EASTMAN,

Lieut. Comdr. U. S. Pot. Flotilla.

The operators in and around the city were on duty all night, and the next night special orders were given to keep offices open.

WAR DEPARTMENT, April 15, 1865.

To COMMODORE MONTGOMERY, Navy Yard:

If the military authorities arrest the murderer of the President and take him to the Yard, put him on a monitor and anchor her in the stream, with strong guard on vessel, wharf and in yard. Call on Commandant Marine Corps for guard. Have vessel immediately prepared ready to receive him any hour, day or night, with necessary instructions. He will be heavily ironed and so guarded as to prevent escape or injury to himself.

GIDEON WELLES, *Sec. Navy.*

Operator Beckwith was hurriedly sent to Port Tobacco, where he tapped the Point Lookout line, April 23, and, it is said, informed the War Department of the whereabouts of Booth, the assassin. For his services in aiding in the taking of Booth, Beckwith received five hundred dollars of the reward offered by the Government.

The best friend the military operator ever had in high office, was stricken down. Wherever he went, he not only was, but manifested himself, friendly to the telegrapher. The operators in the War Department were all on friendly terms with the President, who was not too big a man to know them, and yet a greater, this country may not have produced. To these, but especially the cipherers, whom he met most frequently, he appeared greatly inclined to sadness and melancholy, and it seemed

at times that he indulged in levity on purpose to divert his mind. He had, however, naturally an exceedingly keen sense of the ridiculous and many very serious events reminded him of nonsensical and absurd sayings and anecdotes, to which he was pretty sure to give expression, whoever was present, and he apparently told his stories to the cipher operators, with as keen a relish as to more distinguished auditors. But Mr. Stanton did not appear to relish such trivial talk, evidently regarding the terribly serious business on hand as needing more dignified and too deep attention to permit it.

Among the stories related by the President to the cipherers in the War Department, are the following—the first of which I have seen substantially published elsewhere:

Hearing some newsboys crying, "Here's yer Philadelphy Inquiry," he minced their peculiarly funny pronunciation and tone, and then said to the operators, "Did I ever tell you the joke the Chicago newsboys had on me?" They replied that he had not, so he said: "A short time before my nomination, I was at Chicago attending a law suit. A photographer of that city asked me to sit for a picture, and I did so. This coarse, rough hair of mine was in a particularly bad tonsure at the time, and the picture presented me in all its fright. After my nomination, this being about the only picture of me there was, copies were struck to show those who had never seen me how I looked. The newsboys carried them around to sell, and had for their cry, "Here's yer Old Abe, 'll look better when he gets his hair combed." As related by himself, this struck the operators very humorously, and he laughed over it as heartily as if it was a good joke on somebody else, and had just occurred.

It so happened that for several days, Major Eckert had been out whenever the President came into the office. Coming in one day and finding the Major counting money at his desk, Mr. Lincoln remarked that he believed the Major never came to the office any more, except when there was money to count. Speaking of the coincidence of Eckert's always being out when the President happened to come in, reminded the Major of a story which he related to the President as follows: A certain tailor in Mansfield, O., was very stylish in dress and airy in manner.

As he was passing a shop-keeper's door one day the merchant puffed himself up and gave a long blow expressive of the inflation of the gay little tailor, who indignantly turned around to him and said, "I'll learn you not to blow when I'm passing." The shop-keeper instantly replied "And I'll teach you not to pass when I'm blowing." Mr. Lincoln said that was very good —very like a story which he had heard as follows: A man driving through the country in an open buggy was caught at night in a pouring shower of rain He was hurrying forward towards shelter as fast as possible. As he was passing a farm house, a man laboring under the effects of bad whisky thrust his head out of the window and shouted lustily, "Hulloo! Hulloo!! Hulloo!!!" The traveler stopped and asked him what he wanted. "Nothing of *you*," was the reply. "Well what in the devil do you shout hulloo! for when people are passing?" angrily asked the traveler. "Well what in the devil are you passing for when people are shouting hulloo," coolly answered the wretched inebriate.

Major Eckert asked Mr. Lincoln if the story of his interview with the complainant against General Grant was true. The story was: a growler called on the President and complained bitterly of General Grant's drunkenness. The President inquired very solicitously, if the man could tell him where the General got his liquor. The man really was very sorry but couldn't say where he did get it. The President replied that he would like very much to find out so he could get a quantity of it and send a barrel to all his Major Generals. Mr. Lincoln said he had heard the story before and it would be very good if he had said it, but he did not, and he supposed it was charged to him to give it currency. He then said the original of this story was in King George's time. Bitter complaints were made to the King against his General Wolfe in which it was charged that he was mad. "Well," said the King, "I wish he would bite some of my other Generals then."

Mr. Lincoln also told a pun he had heard, which was gotten off by somebody during the riots in New York, in which the "Paddies figured most conspicuously." Here it is: "It is said that General Kilpatrick is going to New York to quell the riot, but that his name has nothing to do with it."

On another occasion he came to the office, accompanied by a short, thick-set man, whose appearance presented quite a striking contrast to Mr. Lincoln's. "Good evening, Major Eckert," said he. "This man that I have got here with me, is Mr. Judd, of Chicago, the man that I have been having over at Prussia. I don't know that it's any compliment to him to say he is a friend of mine." "Perhaps it's a failing," Mr. Judd remarked, bowing and shaking hands with the Major, and then adding: "We hear it reported at the hotel and on the streets, that Grant has been fighting all day at Chattanooga. How is it, Major?" "I'll tell you how that is," said the President, "because I keep no secrets from you, Mr. Judd. They have made an advance down there and had a little fray, captured about two hundred of the rebels, and gained a point or two. No general engagement as yet reported, and even what has been done is not known to those who make up street reports." He then showed Mr. Judd some despatches, and the conversation turned upon the general condition of affairs—the rebel style of sending in flags of truce in the midst of an engagement, to turn attention, or, as recently done at Chattanooga, to intimidate the Federals by warning them to remove all non-combatants from the town, indicating that a fierce attack upon it was about to be made. Mr. Judd remarked to the President, that from his stand-point, five thousand miles away, with all the circumstances known there, he had often thought the Federal Government not severe enough, not retaliatory enough. "Well," replied Mr. Lincoln, "it is well to be no more severe than we have power to enforce. I have often thought of the man who had made all of his arrangements to go over and whip Billy Grimes, and when about starting was quite taken aback by being asked, 'Suppose Billy Grimes whips you?' 'I declare,' said the man, 'I never thought of that.'"

On New Year's morning, 1864, he came into the office, followed closely by Mr. Chandler, one of the telegraphers. Both noticed a woman crying in the hall, near the telegraph door. Mr. Lincoln asked Eckert, "What is that woman just outside crying about?" but Eckert did not know. "I wish you would go and see," said the kind-hearted President. Eckert learned, and reported that she had come, expecting to visit her husband

in the army of the Potomac, but finding she could not go, was nearly out of funds and had her child with her, she felt very bad. The President thereupon, in his frank and awkward way, said: "Come, now, let's send her down; what do you say?" Major Eckert replied that the strict orders of the Department were, that no woman could go to the army, and suggested a leave of absence for two or three days, so that the man could come to Washington. "Well, come, let's do that. You write the message," said Mr. Lincoln. But the Major suggested that it would be better to make it official, and have Colonel Hardee, A. A. G., prepare it, to which the President replied: "Yes, yes; let Colonel Hardee do it, and let the man come up." After reading the messages on hand, he went away, having at least made one heart glad on this New Year's day, just one year from the day on which he sent forth the great proclamation of emancipation.

In the midst of the great conflict, the Government had an Indian war also on hand, but vexatious as were the great problems, Mr. Lincoln did not overlook many smaller matters. A prominent army officer reported by telegraph from the Northwest with much detail, the operations resulting in the capture of many Indians who had been guilty of barbarities. The report was very long and expensive. It gave every Indian's full name. Some of these, operator H. P. Jones at Philadelphia, who sent it to operator Rosewater at War Department, declares were a line and a half long. Mr. Lincoln saw this despatch and soon the following was sent to the officer by direction of the President: "Hereafter forward such communications by mail."

In North Carolina affairs were still on a war footing. On the 11th of April, news having come on the sixth of the successes of the Army of the Potomac, Sherman's army was again well under way, now for Raleigh. On the thirteenth, operator Anderson with Kilpatrick's cavalry entered Raleigh, where he found three Confederate States telegraphers and a good battery, but pushing right on to Morrisville he tapped the line leading to Greensboro and succeeded in obtaining valuable information by taking off a telegram to General Johnston stating that Federal General Stoneman who started from East Tennessee with

cavalry was fighting at Salisbury, N. C. On the fourteenth Johnston sent word intimating a desire to surrender. Durham's Station was reached by the cavalry next day and now began negotiations in earnest looking to Johnston's capitulation. Anderson opened an office here and maintained telegraphic communication throughout the parley with Sherman, who was much of the time at Raleigh. At two of the meetings of Johnston and Sherman between the armies Anderson was a fortunate spectator. The parley continued until April 26 when Johnston agreed to surrender on the same terms made by Grant. The line from Raleigh to Durham was very useful to Sherman who thus transmitted many despatches for Johnston and received others from him. On the twenth-ninth J. C. McCutcheon, a military operator captured at Burgow, N. C., came into the Federal lines looking decidedly the worse for his experience. The thirty-six thousand eight hundred and seventeen prisoners of war who surrendered to Sherman were permitted to go home, and now the problem was to restore civil authority and general concord throughout the Southern States. When the surrender was made, the telegraph was at the very head-quarters of the officers in Goldsboro where the paroles were being prepared. Major Eckert justly reported that "Mr. O'Brien is deserving of special notice for his energy and perseverance in establishing prompt communication by telegraph in this Department and the men under him, for their vigilance and faithful attention to the interests of the service."

The telegraph had proved of inestimable advantage in the war and was now destined to reap the last victory; the bloodless one which should restore the civil supremacy and re-unite the shattered sections of this Nation under the old constitution, reinvigorated by important amendments involving largely the results of the war. What the Military Telegraph did in this peaceful direction will be told next. It was the crowning glory of all its operations and in the more legitimate sphere of its marvelous workings. Its first telegram, "What hath God wrought?" like "Let us have peace" had filled the people with gratitude.

Ours was the first telegraphic service for army operations carried on, on a large scale. The success achieved by the telegraphers with the Union army more than any other one thing, caused every nation in Europe to embody it in one form or another, as they deemed best, as a part of their regular army service. During the four years' war over fifteen thousand miles of telegraphs were built for army purposes, which, if one continuous line, would reach from China *via* the United States and great oceans, beyond Palestine. Many miles of these lines were built under the fire of an enemy and very many more when there was constant danger of being shot from the poles or along the wayside by the numerous bushwhackers, who took special delight in breaking the telegraph, and then skulked from view of mortal like a coyote that preys by night, but hides himself in his hidden hole by day. Multiply a bushwhacker by six or more and they become dangerous as guerrillas, and it is in this form that they caused greatest danger to the builder or repairman, for they often outnumbered the unguarded builders and besides being better armed, succeeded in surprising the laborers. The service performed by these men, but comparatively few of whom I have been able to mention individually, will never be written. There is no practicable means of obtaining the facts. But the great truth remains, that in danger and out, they labored with a zeal deserving a reward which an unthanking, but not thankless nation has never vouchsafed them. Not a few lost their lives, some in battle, more were wounded and yet a greater number from malaria and other evils incident to constant out of door life, lie unmarked on the soil where hostile armies trod. They were poor and without other ambition than to advance the service they were engaged in. It was their way of fighting for their country. There was no bounty in this way of theirs; there were few promotions; there was constant necessity, and ever attendant danger. Many soldiers were detailed from the ranks to serve thus when civilians could not be obtained in sufficient numbers, thus fixing a measure of the worth of the lineman who may trot his children on his lap as the soldier does, but whose growing boy can not say "my father was in the army too," because the rolls that he was paid on were quarter-master's instead of adjutant general's.

These fifteen thousand miles of line and their operation from May 1, 1861 to June 30, 1865, cost the Government $2,655,500, but single messages have not been wanting that amply repaid this entire sum. The probable aggregate number of telegrams sent over these lines during the war, is six million, five hundred thousand, by which dividing the entire cost, we have an expense to the Government of about forty cents per message. Thus the message to Corse at Rome sent part way by telegraph and which saved Allatoona, cost about forty cents; the messages sent during the battle of Mechanicsville, which perhaps saved the Army of the Potomac, cost about forty cents each; those from the Wilderness to Appomattox calling for troops to this point and that, cost respectively about forty cents; the message that turned A. J. Smith's troops to the protection of St. Louis, cost forty cents; the telegram announcing the fall of Richmond, cost forty cents; but why reiterate? Every chapter is in itself conclusive that under the wise administration of Colonel Stager the Government was getting more for its cost *than from any other war service.*

Side by side with the "wonder working wire," often ran that other revolutionizer of war, the steam engine. Like a team well yoked, they always worked well together. There always subsisted a fraternity of feeling between the employés, due in part to the intimate relations they sustained and in part to the anomalous position of the *attachés* respectively; for the railroad man too was beyond the purview of military honors. That splendid fellow who, on the Atlanta Road, at General Sherman's request, ran his engine into the enemy's lines to draw the fire of his cannon and thus disclose their position, returning it is true, in safety after sustaining a terrible fire from many guns; and that other gallant engineer who, on the Orange & Alexandria Railroad, stopped his engine because guerrillas were firing at him, and began throwing chunks of wood at them; these and many another, whose conduct I might mention, were among the citizen defenders of the Union, *for whom the Government reserved no honors.* General McCallum and other railroad officials spent their best energies and most wearisome hours in transporting, feeding, arming and clothing the army. The long and numerous trains necessary were, under the direction of the

telegraph, passing at nearly every switch, and thus only, were single tracks on long routes, able to maintain great armies hundreds of miles from their base. In this way Sherman supplied his host in Atlanta from Louisville.

Well done, thou good and faithful servants.

CHAPTER XIX.

RECONSTRUCTION.—THE CORPS DISBANDED.—ITS OFFICERS PROMOTED.—LINES TURNED OVER TO PRIVATE COMPANIES.— RECAPITULATORY STATEMENTS.— OFFICIAL PRESENTATION TO TEN MEMBERS OF THE CORPS.— DEATH OF TWO MEMBERS.—A FEW APPRECIATORY LETTERS AND OTHER EVIDENCES OF THE VALUE OF THE CORPS— CANADIAN OPERATORS.— FINALE.

Triumphs of peace are ofttimes more beneficent than those which are war-stained in human misery. Suffering is an essential in war, which not infrequently has produced no public good to either belligerent, but the victories of science and art, untinged by the glamour of heroic strife "on the red sands of the battle field," while they may not occasion ostentatious triumphs, result only in absolute good. The day of the conqueror for conquest merely, has passed; that of the philosopher, scientist and artist is supplanting it, and all cognate evils. Men may for diversion delight in Homeric tales to the end of time, but Ulysses will never supplant Haydn; Hector will not overmatch Angelo; Cæsar will not o'ertop Luther; Napoleon will not outshine Fulton; even Grant's history may be laid aside for that of Samuel Finley Breese Morse; and no man aims so high as to hope to shadow the great Antetype.

If Grant's will and combination during the war justly made him illustrious, the genius of Morse which made his strategy possible, also crowned the Union victories with a speedy national reconstruction. No sooner had the clash of arms ceased at Smithfield, N. C., than with merciful haste over strips of line then repaired, Sherman's message to General Wilson, who was killing and burning in the heart of Georgia, called a halt. The white flag was quickly raised all along the line, even west of the Mississippi, where there were yet men, who, as a *dernier ressort*

dreamed of a trans-Mississippi republic; they too, soon accepted it as denoting peace.

The Federal Government, alive to the importance of the telegraph in the last crisis; the crisis of dawning peace, edicted that all lines within the States lately at war with the Government should be restored and operated, or at least controlled, by the United States Military Telegraph Corps. Hence, no sooner was the end at hand than Gilmore, about Charleston, S. C.; O'Brien, about Raleigh; Caldwell, about Richmond; Lynch, in West Virginia; VanDuzer, in the Division of the Mississippi; Clowry, in the Department of Missouri; Fuller, of the Gulf, and Gross, in Kentucky, were directed to restore communication, by the main routes, throughout the entire territory whose people were so lately in rebellion. It was a great work, that of rebuilding in many places and repairing generally, the telegraphs of the Confederacy which, for lack of funds, of help, but most of all, of material, had become almost useless. Yet it was a labor of love in which operators and other employés on either side joined with an alacrity that reflected infinite credit to those engaged. It was, moreover, destined to serve a peaceful purpose; one, of all others, its inventor most delighted in. The final victory after all was not to be one of arms, but of applied science; one of art. An art which would make marauding dangerous and guerrilla warfare impossible, for now that the Confederate armies were disbanded, the authorities feared that small bands of desperate men would make a hell of that splendid country, so well adapted to become a paradise. And so it would have been had not the tell-tale telegraph revealed their hidings, until these land pirates without a flag, became solicitous only for personal safety.

When the war ceased, the trans-Mississippi wires were badly broken south of Little Rock and west and south of Memphis. East of the Mississippi River, Canby's forces had worked great harm to the lines, while Wilson, in Georgia, Stoneman and Gillem, in Western Virginia, North and South Carolina, and Sherman, in Georgia and the Carolinas, had also wrought great destruction. To repair these injuries and open the entire country as speedily as possible, Colonel Stager now ordered all hands to the work. Accordingly, in the Gulf Department, including

Texas, (Captain Fuller, and after him, his successor, Captain Gross, who came early in July, 1865,) we note the important fact that over thirty-four hundred miles of telegraphs were put in order, including about five hundred miles of new lines. The Shreveport and Alexandria telegraph line extending from Shreveport, La., to Mansfield, La., forty miles, recently constructed by D. L. Holden for the Confederates, was not working. The Arkansas State Telegraph line, running from Camden, Ark., *via* Magnolia, Shreveport, Marshall, Jefferson, Henderson and Rusk, to Crockett, Texas, nearly three hundred miles, was found working from Shreveport to Crockett, one hundred and seventy-five miles, but between Shreveport and Camden, it was broken in many places, and so poor had the company become that all its net earnings for two years were forty thousand dollars, due it by the collapsed Confederacy. Hence, L. C. Baker, its Superintendent, who had followed it beyond its original limits farther into the Confederate wilderness, as the successive Union victories drove the enemy away, was without the necessary funds to restore the wire. It was no longer the Memphis, Little Rock and Fort Smith line, but one which C. P. Bertrand, its President, and H. A. Montgomery, its General Superintendent, had been forced to remove and relocate. Baker, who followed it to protect the company's interests, was made Military Superintendent. The Southwestern telegraph line continued the connection from Crockett to Houston, one hundred and sixty miles, under the direction of D. P. Shepard. Only about one hundred and twenty miles of this wire was in working order in fair weather. This line was likewise the result of Federal successes, for originally it ran from Vicksburg, Miss., to Camden, Ark. The Star State Telegraph, another line, connected Houston, Texas, with Galveston and Liberty, one hundred miles, under the management of D. L. Davis, after C. C. Clute went to Mexico, just before the final collapse. It was built of different sized wire, and would not bear the necessary strain between poles. Louis B. Spellman was sent to General Granger's Military District, head-quarters at Galveston, and S. L. Robinson to General Herron's, at Shreveport, as assistant managers, to oversee the restoration and workings of these several wires. In their efforts they were greatly aided by the

respective superintendents and operators found on the lines, all of whom took the oath of allegiance, and were glad indeed to work for "greenback" money, as heretofore their salary in Confederate scrip would not pay for their board. About July 1, these lines were in workable condition. Besides these and lines connecting New Orleans, new ones were built by order of General Sheridan, to connect him with the distant parts of his command, viz., from Hempstead, Texas, to San Antonio, two hundred and five miles; from Brazos Santiago, Texas, to Brownsville, thirty-five miles; and from Vicksburg, Miss., to Shreveport, La., two hundred and ten miles. Among the operators found on the old lines and employed by the Government, were Wm. Davis and E. Brooks, at Galveston; W. A. Wherry and F. V. Daniel, at Crockett; G. M. Baker, at Shreveport; Philip H. Fall, Lee S. Daniel and M. Harris, at Houston, and Frank Thompson at Anderson. Federal operator A. W. O'Neal, at a later date, came from Alabama, and served in the Rio Grande District very acceptably as assistant manager, and John R. Dixon, at Austin, and Louis H. Korty, at Shreveport, and Edward P. Whitford, at San Antonio, acted as cipherers.

In the States of Arkansas, Kansas and Missouri, no new telegraph territory was opened within Clowry's district, and hence his seventeen hundred and two miles of line answered every purpose, connecting with St. Louis, beside many intermediate points, the distant ones of St. Joseph, Kansas City, Fort Scott, Fort Smith and Little Rock. Thus the territory west of the great river was more perfectly than ever before brought within the jurisdiction of the telegraph.

The Cairo and Memphis wires were put in order once more, and Captain VanDuzer, at Nashville, started numerous parties in three general directions, to meet Fuller's men from the south-west, Eckert's from the east, and Gilmore's from the south-east. VanDuzer's three thousand miles and over of telegraphs were soon added to Fuller's and Clowry's. Gilmore's territory was extended westward to Montgomery, Ala., and northward to Atlanta, Ga., and included South Carolina and Florida.

We have noted in a previous chapter the completion of a line from Mobile, *via* Clinton, to Vicksburg, and from Decatur, Ala., and Corinth, Miss., to Memphis, Tenn. At Montgomery, Ala.,

J. J. Egan was doing his best early in May, to restore that line to Mobile. Confederate States operators Hughes, Reed, Thornton and Mingle were there, also anxious to take the oath and assist. M. H. Bassett was sent to Selma to work from there. Superintendent C. G. Merriwether co-operated with Captain Fuller's assistant, A. W. O'Neal, effectively about Montgomery, as Manager Sandford did with Smith at Mobile, and Superintendent J. H. Presley and Ed. Burke about Aberdeen. Montgomery was, in May, in communication with Macon in the East, points on the Memphis & Charleston Railroad on the north, Vicksburg on the west, and Mobile to the south, and scores of intermediate places. John F. Ludwig, R. B. Lines and Frank Benner at various times, at Jackson, Miss., C. W. Pearson, at Columbus, C. W. Moore, at Mobile, C. A. Keefer, at New Orleans, W. H. Munro, at Baton Rouge, T. J. Rodgers, at Grenada, acted as cipherers.

It was at Montgomery that General A. J. Smith made his head-quarters, and from there he distributed troops to many towns. Among the Southern operators employed hereabouts were, at Montgomery, Barney Hughes, James G. Thornton, John K. Mingle, Jeremiah L. Reed, Samuel E. Holt, Milliage Hoffman, Alfred F. Brannon; at Uniontown, J. R. Adam; Demopolis, R. D. Hoot; Selma, W. M. Nettles; Talledega, C. E. Lacey; Greenville, James D. Porter; Evergreen, W. P. Jones; Pollard, F. N. McMullen; Columbus, W. T. Aude; Jackson, E. L. Marchant, A. G. M. Russell and John Galbraith; Meridian, E. Howard, G. Heiss, G. W. McMurchy and W. H. Cody; Shubuta, W. H. Patton; Mobile, J. Bohanna, Taylor Adams, R. B. Weeden, W. Henley, H. B. Taylor, Dr. John C. Thomas; Blakley, J. M. Worden; Osyka, J. T. Alleyn and George B. Hennesy; Lauderdale, Ed. C. Burke; Gainsville Junc., Ed. H. Hogshead; Columbus, W. E. Flippen; Brandon, Nat. Flippen; Water Valley, N. C. David; Oxford, B. W. Collier; Holly Springs, B. H. Lucas; Panola, W. M. Marshall; Senatobia, J. F. Richardson; Clinton, Miss., Nat. Walton; Hazelhurst, W. H. Lanbright; Brook Haven, C. B. Harvey; Summit, Chas. St. John; Amite, H. C. Davis; Clinton, La., J. E. Mansker; Woodville, W. H. Chisholm; Columbus, Miss., S. E. Smith; New Orleans, P. Molony and J. L. Adam; Enterprise, S. C. Thielgard and W. O. Kelly;

Citronelle, C. I. Depew; Buckatuna, W. H. Young; Gainsville, W. H. Bush; Macon, Miss., J. R. Coburn; Okolona, J. R. Coburn and —— Emanuel; West Point, Miss., F. W. Mitchell; Lake, A. Grimes; Morten, A. M. Record; Canton, G. W. Beard; Goodman, L. C. Presley; Durant, E. J. Marshall; Vaiden, J. T. Poindexter; Grenada, T. F. Marshall and James H. Henderson.

In the Augusta district, J. A. Brenner superintendent, was especially active and his corps of operators found more line building to attend to than ever before. Among these were Southern telegraphers, W. H. Turner, chief operator in Augusta, T. L. Brown, A. Tweedy, W. J. Evans, V. F. Campbell, J. K. Freeman and E. O. Martin of the same city. The latter took charge of builders on the Savannah route—M. H. Callum Columbia, S. C., and S. P. Evans, of Florence, S. C. offices. J. R. Ligon rebuilt the line towards Charleston. E. M. Burch operated at Sumter, S. C. C. T. Mason acted as assistant superintendent, rebuilding lines on Wilmington and Manchester road between Kingsville and Wilmington and Florence and Charleston. S. C. Dodge was at a way office between Augusta and Columbia. E. R. Dodge and P. Sledge at Milton. G. B. Huyler at No. 10 Central Railroad, a test station between Macon and Augusta. S. D. Mundle at Marion, S. C.; J. R. W. Johnston at Aiken, S. C.; A. Fulda, G. H. King, W. R. Johnson at Winsboro, S. C.; D. B. Northrup at Opelika; J. D. Potts at Wilmington; E. K. Wilson at West Point; G. Winter at LaGrange; J. H. Wade at Newman; J. B. Aveithe at Winnsboro, Ga.; P. H. Ward at Marion, S. C.; C. Y. Brennecke at Chester, S. C.; J. T. Quarles at Pocotaligo; and T. M. Bryan at Darlington. In North Carolina F. W. Kennan, W. E. Dulin, S. W. Whitaker, Lee Angel, John W. Brown, N. B. Topping, N. A. Lee, Arthur Daniel, S. A. Howard, J. C. Duncan and J. E. Sheppard, also Southern operators, were, under Richard O'Brien, rendering such aid as lay in their power. I am well aware that, chiefly for lack of the facts, many able Southern telegraphers are not named above; that not a few of them were men of rare worth; such, for example, as John VanHorn, J. B. Tree, George Trabue, D. Flanery, John B. Morris and Thomas Johnson in the West, J. W. Kates, Joseph McGovern, Charles

A. Gaston, E. T. Smith, W. R. Cathcart and William Barr who during the war were in the East.

O'Brien and Caldwell, Eckert's assistants, were not behind hand with their two thousand miles of wire. H. B. Plant and R. B. Bullock of the Southern Express Company that owned about four hundred miles of line and Dr. Norvin Green of the "Southwestern" rendered every assistance in their power. Lynch's lines were intact. Gilmore brought his twenty-five hundred miles of telegraph promptly into the great network and the month of May that terminated the war, did not end until from Houston, Tex., to Washington; from St. Augustine, Fla., to St. Louis, Mo.; from Louisville, Ky., to Mobile, Ala., the territory was enwebbed by a network of wires operated by an able corps of telegraphers, thus making the restoration of peace seem more real, than it were otherwise possible.

Thus once more the whole country was brought again to the National Capital and to every newspaper office in the land. Relatives and friends, unwilling to await the reconstruction of the railroads and re-establishment of the mails, had recourse to the wire. It was the first time in four years; and in that period what untoward events might not have occurred. The work of the civilian authorities was now paramount. The autonomy of the States instead of being curtailed was to be enlarged by the autonomy of the individual. Military governments arose and in apt time were displaced by those of the States, rehabilitated to their *ante bellum* privileges. These things and their incidents occasioned a vast amount of telegraphing throughout the territory whose people were so lately in revolt. A free interchange of opinions could only be possible by the use of cipher keys, wherefore the cipherers were useful to the end.

With the policy of the Government in reconstructing the States, the telegraph had nothing more to do than with the plans for the conduct of the war. Its mission was an agency merely. But it was that kind of an agent that brought the power of the Government speedily to all disturbed points with happiest results.

By direction of the Secretary of War, Union operators were placed in the principal offices and exclusively handled the cipher keys. J. H. Emerick in Richmond, J. H. Nichols in Peters-

burg, George C. Maynard and Frank Stewart in Washington, C. A. Homan in Wilmington, N. C., George Henderson in Newberne, W. J. Dealey at Fort Monroe and W. F. Holloway in Norfolk were among those who served as cipherers in the East. The unimportant offices were filled by Southern operators who took the oath. In cases where the Government did not require the exclusive use of lines, their legitimate and usual business was not interfered with, but all Government despatches took precedence. Managers of private lines were authorized to collect tolls and required to pay most of the operators and operating expenses.

The Federal control of all the telegraphs in the South continued until December 1, 1865. The Secretary of War having directed that all Southern telegraph lines belonging to commercial telegraph companies be turned over to the respective companies owning the same, those companies assumed control of their properties December 1, but the Assistant Superintendents under the direction of Colonel Stager, continued on duty at their respective posts, in charge of all military telegraph property in their respective departments and continued to exercise a supervision of the business, prohibiting the transmission of anything improper, so far as the Government was concerned and held themselves ready to resume entire control of the lines at any time they might be directed so to do. Consequently on the 30th of November, all operators not employed upon strictly military lines and not retained at chief cities as cipherers were discharged. One by one the cipherers left the service or were discharged until finally but one office remained; that was presided over by B. R. Bates (1869) at the stairway landing in a hall of the War Department, where Colonel Scott had in 1861 opened the first military telegraph office.

The following official showing of the condition of affairs when the Military Telegraph was substantially wound up, is taken from General Stager's last annual report for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1866:

My report for the fiscal year 1865 was forwarded to your Department September 15, 1865, accompanied by the reports of the several officers then on duty in this service, and acting under my immediate orders. During the past year, I have continued to be

stationed at Cleveland, O.: as chief of United States Military Telegraphs; issuing from time to time, to the officers serving under me such directions and orders for the guidance and maintenance of the Military Telegraph, as the operations of the same within the several Departments, demanded or the exigencies of the military situation required. The decisive and glorious result of the brilliant campaign of General U. S. Grant before the city of Richmond and the crushing blow the rebellion received by the gallant and remarkable march of Lieutenant General W. T. Sherman, from Atlanta to the seaside, enabled the Government to immediately commence a retrenchment of expenditures incident to the military operations in nearly all branches of the public service. The Military Telegraph however was an exception, to a great extent, to the immediate application of this principle, so desirable to all, and important to the public welfare. That the rebellion had received its death-blow, was undeniable, but the important and momentous question of the restoration of the rebellious States, was yet to be considered and decided upon. All commercial lines of telegraph, within the Southern States, that had been usurped by and were in the possession of, the rebel authorities, were taken possession of by the United States in the latter part of the fiscal year 1865. So long as these States continued under United States military control, and until their civil governments had been restored, to a certain extent the lines of telegraph throughout such States remained, by order of the Secretary of War under the direction and control of the officers of the United States Military Telegraph.

On the 1st day of December, 1865, by direction of the Secretary of War, the commercial telegraph lines above referred to, were restored, with wise restrictions, to the telegraph companies claiming and establishing ownership thereto. It was thought expedient however, to retain in certain localities expert telegraphers as cipherers, through whom the Government would at all times have a reliable, rapid and confidential medium of communication with its officers and authorized agents. By order of the Quarter-master General, under date of February 27, 1866, all United States Military Telegraph lines and appurtenances within the States south of the Ohio River, were turned over to the several commercial telegraph companies owning the "telegraph patent right" within such territory. This was in consideration of the relinquishment by the telegraph companies of "all claims against the United States for

the use of their patent," for the use of their lines preceding their final restoration, and for all losses sustained by said companies by the exclusion of commercial business from those portions of their lines, which have been in possession of the United States. Under the provisions of the order of the Quarter-master General above alluded to, such United States Military Telegraph lines as were in operation north of the Ohio River, were sold from time to time to the commercial telegraph companies owning lines in the States in which the Military Telegraph lines were constructed, and the proceeds arising from said sales properly accounted for, by the officers under whose direction the property was disposed of. In further obedience to the order of the Quarter-master General previously referred to, as soon as the Military Telegraph lines under charge of the several officers, had been disposed of, the officers turned over to the Quarter-master's Department, all other public property then remaining in their hands, and reported to the Quarter-master General, the complete execution of his order. The Quarter-master General had no further duties to assign to the officers, thus reporting. An order issued by the Secretary of War, under date of Washington, D. C., May 28, 1866, honorably mustered out of the service the following officers, taking effect upon the date following each name, respectively:

Brevet Lieut. Col. R. C. Clowry, Capt., A. Q. M., May 31, 1866.
Brevet Lieut. Col. S. G. Lynch, Capt., A. Q. M., May 31, 1866.
Brevet Lieut. Col. W. L. Gross, Capt., A. Q. M., June 5, 1866.
Brevet Lieut. Col. J. C. VanDuzer, Capt., A. Q. M., June 5, 1866.
Brevet Lieut. Col. J. R. Gilmore, Capt., A. Q. M., June 5, 1866.
Brevet Capt. L. Whitney,* Capt., A. Q. M., May 31, 1866.

At the close of the fiscal year 1866, the only officers remaining in the United States service connected with Military Telegraphs, were the chief of this Corps on duty at these head-quarters, and Brevet Brigadier General Thos. T. Eckert, on duty at the War Department, Washington, D. C. I have the gratification and honor to state, that all of the officers connected with United States Military Telegraph during this fiscal year, received from the President of the United States, for meritorious service, promotion of two or more grades of brevet rank, as follows:

Colonel A. Stager, A. D. C., A. Q. M. to Brevet Brigadier General.
Major T. T. Eckert, A. D. C., A. Q. M. to Brevet Brigadier General.

*NOTE.—Whitney's head-quarters were in Washington, where he rendered Major Eckert very valuable aid.

Captain S. G. Lynch, A. Q. M. to Brevet Lieutenant Colonel.
Captain W. L. Gross, A. Q. M to Brevet Lieutenant Colonel.
Captain J. C. VanDuzer, A. Q. M. to Brevet Lieutenant Colonel.
Captain R. C. Clowry, A. Q. M. to Brevet Lieutenant Colonel.
Captain J. R. Gilmore, A. Q. M. to Brevet Lieutenant Colonel.

The following tables show the amount of money for which I have been accountable during the fiscal year 1866:

ON HAND JULY 1, 1865.	
Received from officers,	$ 12,561.10
Received from U. S. Treasury,	563,900.00
Received from other sources,	3,737.00
Total,	$580,198.10
EXPENDED DURING THE YEAR.	
Transferred to officers,	$567,637.00
On hand June 30, 1866,	12,561.10
Total,	$580,198.10

I have the honor to submit the following *résumé*, showing the number of miles of United States Military Telegraph lines constructed yearly during the continuance of the rebellion—Total number of miles constructed—number of miles in operation each year—the amount of funds applied yearly to military telegraphs, and the total amount of funds furnished by the United States for the operation and maintenance of United States Military Telegraphs from May 1, 1861 to June 30, 1866:

	LAND LINES.	SUBMARINE.
No. miles constructed up to June 30 1862,	3,508	63
No. of miles constructed during fiscal year 1863,	1,755	
No. of miles constructed during fiscal year 1864,	3,692	15¾
No. of miles constructed during fiscal year 1865,	3,246	68¾
No. of miles constructed during fiscal year 1866,	2,010	30½
Total No. of both classes,		14,389
Addition of temporary field lines constructed during war,		1,000
Total No. of miles U. S. Military Telegraphs, field, land and submarine, lines constructed,		15,389

No of miles of United States Military Telegraph lines in operation during

	LAND.	SUBMARINE.
The fiscal year 1862,	3,658	63
The fiscal year 1863,	5,798	28
The fiscal year 1864,	6,911	55½
The fiscal year 1865,	8,501	121½
The fiscal year 1866,	8,253	81

In addition to the eight thousand, six hundred twenty-two and one-half miles of Military Telegraph lines in operation during the year 1865, there were about five thousand miles of commercial telegraph lines within the Southern States under the control and supervision of the officers of the United States Military Telegraph.

Amount of money received from the U. S. Treasury up to June 30, 1862,	$ 271,500.00
For the fiscal year ending June 30, 1863,	418,000.00
For the fiscal year ending June 30, 1864,	606,000.00
For the fiscal year ending June 30, 1865,	1,360,000.00
For the fiscal year ending June 30, 1866,	563,900.00
Total received and expended or transferred by me as chief of U. S. Military Telegraphs,	$3,219,400.00

The only official recognition ever vouchsafed members of the Corps, other than by mere words of appreciation, occurred shortly after the war, and was confined to a few of the most prominent in the East, as the following letter of presentation, written by General Eckert, who had been appointed Assistant Secretary of War, will show:

OFFICE UNITED STATES MILITARY TELEGRAPH.
War Department, July 31, 1866.

D. H. BATES, Assistant Manager Department of the Potomac; CHARLES A. TINKER, Chief Operator War Department; ALBERT B. CHANDLER, Cipher and Disbursing Clerk, War Department; A. H. CALDWELL, Chief Operator Army of the Potomac; DENNIS DOREN, Superintendent of Construction, Department of the Potomac; FRANK STEWART, Cipher Clerk, War Department; GEORGE W. BALDWIN, War Department; RICHARD O'BRIEN, Chief Operator Department North Carolina; GEORGE D. SHELDON, Chief Operator Fortress Monroe, Va.; M. V. B. BUELL, Chief Operator Army of the James—

GENTLEMEN: I have been instructed by the Secretary of War, to present to each of you one of the silver watches which were purchased and used to establish uniform time in the Army of the Potomac, marked "U. S. Military Telegraph," as an acknowledgement of the meritorious and valuable services you have rendered to the Government during the war, while under my direction as an employé of the United States Military Telegraph. It gives me

great pleasure to comply with these instructions, and I will take this occasion to thank you for myself for your faithful performance of the important trusts which have been confided to you in the various capacities in which you have served, and especially as cipher operators. Yours, very truly,

THOS. T. ECKERT, *Asst. Sec. of War,*
and Superintendent U. S. Military Telegraph.

It is to be regretted that in this closing chapter there should be occasion to refer to further misfortunes. John A. Sheridan, a noble-hearted young man, died at Burksville Junction, Va., in the summer of 1865, from congestive chills and gross neglect by the post surgeon, who, although often sent for did not call on the sick man once during the day he was attacked. Toward evening, Sheridan became unconscious, and at 7:30, P. M., died. His brother operators caused his remains to be embalmed and sent home to his widowed mother, in charge of operator L. M. Painter, who was with him when he died.

A. Harper Caldwell entered this service in August, 1861, in charge of General McClellan's head-quarters office, and continued from that time, to the end of the war, chief operator of the Army of the Potomac, accompanying it on every march, and serving during every siege. On the 1st of September, 1866, he left the Department of the Potomac for General Sheridan's head-quarters in New Orleans, where he remained as cipher operator until his death, November 25, 1866. At a meeting of the operators in the District of Columbia, immediately held, proper resolutions were passed and many telegrams of sympathy and condolence from operators already scattered, but who felt that they must give expression to their sorrow, were read. His remains were sent to Zanesville, Ohio, for interment.

In an appendix we have noted the names of many of the military operators who have since gone to that "undiscovered country from whose bourne no traveler returns." Some of them died, fighting an enemy more terrible than any human foe—that dread disease, yellow fever, that almost depopulated Memphis and other river cities, and spread terror throughout the South, and caused deepest solicitude to pervade the United States. In such times, when the carrying of mails is prohibited and only medicines and sanitary goods are conveyed, the telegraph be-

comes the only messenger from the stricken parts to an anxious public. In such emergencies, ex-Union operators and Southern telegraphers have stood side by side at their respective posts, receiving and transmitting the dread news of fresh burials and the urgent demands of a dying people. If it were within the province of this work to detail the intrepid conduct, the heroic self-denial, the extraordinary disregard of self during those great public calamities, to the end that humanity might be subserved, it would afford the author great pleasure to chronicle those splendid efforts that cost so dearly—that laid John D. Tinney and Edmund W. Barnes, Alvah S. Hawkins and Hugh Irvine, and scores of others, many of them volunteers, in martyr graves.

The Corps lost by death at the hands of the enemy — not counting soldiers temporarily employed to assist or protect— at least eight members; many more were wounded; probably twenty-five operators died in the army, and very many more from diseases there contracted, while yet others are to this day suffering from the exposures which they underwent; seventy-one others were captured, many of whom were imprisoned in Southern hostelries of death. About one in twelve of the operators engaged in the service were killed, wounded or captured or died in the service from its exposures. If these losses, the risks and the service rendered, do not entitle the Corps to military honors and Governmental recognition, it is difficult to understand wherein the Signal *corps d' armee* and staff officers obtained such preference. On the Peninsula especially, and other fields that might be named where the Signal Corps could not operate effectively, the field operator and his orderlies performed better staff service than it would have been possible for rider and horse alone to do. I have seen fit to address five or six of the Union Generals for some word evidencing their estimate of the War Telegraph Service and received the following replies:

HEAD-QUARTERS MILITARY DIVISION OF THE MISSOURI,
CHICAGO, September, 24, 1879.

W. R. PLUM, ESQ., Chicago, Ills.:

MY DEAR SIR:—Your letter of the thirteenth instant is at hand, and I have carefully considered its contents. I fully agree with

you that the duties assigned to tne Military Telegraph operators during the war, were, as a general thing, well performed, and the men were almost universally trustworthy. In my own experience, I found them invariably active, brave and honorable; and I am glad to know that some one who is cognizant of their work, and who can speak from personal experience, proposes to write their military history. I have no doubt, but that individual acts of heroism can be found, that will show them to the public in a new and surprising light, and place them, and their work, on a higher plane than they hitherto have held in the estimation of the loyal citizens of the country. I am, dear sir, truly yours,

P. H. SHERIDAN, *Lieutenant General.*

SAINT PAUL, February 6, 1879.

MY DEAR SIR:—Upon my return from Washington to-day I find your letter of October 1 unanswered. I have not by me the memorandum to enable me to give the dates of the marches and battles of the Price raid campaign. My official report on file at Washington will give all and if you can get a copy of that or get access to it you can supply all dates. It seems to me that I can not write anything that will be interesting to the outside world upon the "Military Telegraph." All officers commanding in chief in the field of course testify alike to its inestimable value. The location and movements of the hostile army were determined by this means almost as by magic when the wire was cut; and when it was not cut the knowledge of all officers concerning the enemy wherever such officers might be, became at once through this means the knowledge of the commander in the field. On many instances Armstrong cut the wires at points remote from all telegraphic offices and got information and orders from points hundreds of miles away, and from Department Head-quarters, the movements of Rebel and Union troops in all portions of the Department, and to those of us who had their field operators, it seemed a mystery how campaigns on a large scale, had ever been conducted without their aid. There can be no doubt that in the late war, thousands of lives and millions of treasure were saved by the field telegraph operators. So far as my observation extended they were as a class brave, energetic and faithful young men who deserve well of their country. Truly yours,

JOHN B. SANBORN,
Late Bvt. Major Genl. Vol., Comd. in the Field.

HARTFORD, CONN., Feb. 20, 1879.

MY DEAR SIR:—I have received your letter of the twelfth inst. The duties of the telegraph operators who accompanied armies in the field during the late war, were so well performed, and the men themselves were so modest and unobtrusive, that their merits have not received sufficient notice from the generals with whom they served. I know no class of men in the army who were more faithful and energetic. The fact that they were not military men who depended upon proper notice from their commanding generals for their reputation and promotion, is probably the reason for this neglect. In my own case, I testify that I always found them alert, intelligent and courageous, and it gives me pleasure to certify to this fact, even at this late day. I do not now recollect any incidents that would be of interest in your forth-coming work. But I recall that it was always a surprise to me, and a very pleasant one, too, to learn, often within an hour or two after getting into a camp after a long day's march, that telegraphic communication was open with head-quarters, several days' march in rear, thus saving the lives and time of couriers and horses, and giving a comfortable feeling of security, which would otherwise have been wanting, as well as enabling the Commanding General to receive and impart important information. The telegraph operators of that time remind me of a first-class military small arm. The man who uses it is not particularly struck with its merits while he has it, but deprive him of it or give him an inferior one, and he immediately appreciates the merits of the one he has lost. Very truly yours,

W. B. FRANKLIN.

UNITED STATES SENATE CHAMBER,
Washington, March 3, 1879.

MY DEAR SIR:—Your kind letter of the twenty-fourth inst. is at hand. I have no hesitation in saying, that the "Telegraph Corps" was of infinite service during the late war, and I am free to say that I never knew a body of men who possessed more integrity, industry and efficiency than the operators with whom I was thrown. I wish you great success in your work. Am glad to hear such good accounts from Jaques. He is a nice fellow.

Yours truly, A. E. BURNSIDE.

STATE OF NEW JERSEY, EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT.
Trenton, March 8, 1879.

MY DEAR SIR:—Your letter of the twenty-fourth ulto has reached

me. I am very glad to learn that a competent person has undertaken the task of doing justice to the services of the Military Telegraph operators during the war, and I share with you your feeling of surprise and regret that the work has not already been done. I do not think that any one appreciates more highly than I do, the value of those services, and the loyal and invaluable devotion so constantly displayed by the men of whom Caldwell was so excellent an example. If I can at any time be of service to you in carrying out your plan, please let me know.

In great haste. Very truly yours,

GEO. B. MCCLELLAN.

Shortly before their deaths General Joseph E. Hooker remarked that the Corps "had never received proper recognition at the hands of the Government," and he was glad its history was being written, and General George H. Thomas wrote incidentally: "I feel deeply indebted to the telegraph operators of my late department, for the efficient service they rendered me in the campaigns we passed through."

Secretary Stanton at one time actually spread a splendid lunch in the War Department for his operators, and presided at the repast. General Halleck, Major Eckert and other prominent officers also sat down. In an official report Stanton said:

The Military Telegraph, under the general direction of Colonel Stager and Major Eckert, has been of inestimable value to the service, and no corps has surpassed it.

In our recent memorable struggle for the preservation of free Government, spoke General N. P. Banks at the Morse Memorial reception, the telegraph performed an important and patriotic part. * * It was the constant telegraphic communication from the Government and army, that re-assured the people, bound the loyal States together and stimulated civil and military authorities to greater exertion, by the almost limitless contributions of men and money to the cause of the Union. * * It was in truth an electric nerve that united them, consolidated their power, inspired them with courage and hope and *finally led them to victory*. It was the trusted agent in all great movements, civil or military; the foundation of every triumph, partial or general. Thirty million people were united by new and unaccustomed ties; electric chains of celestial fire, flashes of etherial and supernal light, touched, thrilled,

instructed, fortified, illumined every soul. It was the chord of the national heart; overburdened by sorrows, it might have been broken, but with this support it was always ready for greater sacrifices, and beat with higher and nobler aspirations for the cause of universal liberty. The humblest citizen of the republic will remember it as the instrument that, morning, noon and night, renewed the determination and courage of the people, and every soldier will gladly attest to the great aid it gave the defenders of the nation from the Satanic assaults on Sumter to the surrender of the Confederate armies to General Grant, which ended the war.

Comte De Paris, whose history of the war so far as finished, is undoubtedly one of the best ever published, although a *foreigner*, is the only historian who attempts fitly to notice the telegraph service. He says:*

A single example will show the importance of the Military Telegraph. Without counting the lines already in existence, of which possession was taken, the employés of the Government constructed five thousand, two hundred kilometers during a single year of the war, and they forwarded nearly one million, eight hundred thousand despatches; and sufferings and dangers were not spared those men whose merit was the greater, in that it was less conspicuous. More than one among them, shivering with fever in an unhealthy station, lay down with his ear against the instrument to write with a trembling hand under dictation, some important despatches whose secret he would confide to no one. Many paid with their lives for their boldness in setting up their instruments under the very fire of the enemy, and one fact almost incredible, bears testimony to the dangers to which they were thus exposed. During the siege of Charleston, the wire which connected the besieging batteries ran so close to the rifle pits of the Confederate skirmishers, that it was frequently cut by their balls.

It would be at least unkind not to notice before closing, the fact that many of the Union operators came from Canada and other northern provinces, and in all cases performed their duties with a fidelity that perhaps should have been expected only of those who jeopard their lives for their own country. The names of such now recalled, are: Edward Conway, Frank Benner,

*History of the Civil War in America, Vol. I, 280.

Frank Drummond, M. J. McCrickett, W. H. Glasscott, A. W. Howell, R. M. Howell, William B. Somerville, John Nicholson, J. M. Nye, William Forster, J. Blair, John H. Bracken, Hugh Craig, A. B.Ellison, Geo. N. Norton, Charles A. Keefer, W. H. Merkley, Edwin Peel and George Railton.

War ended, and reconstruction, despite its errors and consequent crimes, became an accomplished fact. The Union once more complete, strange as it may seem, is the cherished condition of the whole people. The telegraph may not now run to the war office; what matters it? Its twelve thousand offices and twenty-five thousand operators in North America continue to disseminate information and further the interests of mankind. The armed legions so lately massed are scattered forever; the right has prevailed; and the forces now surviving are mainly pursuing peaceful vocations. Soon they even will be mustered out of that service. But the telegraph will be left, and under the guidance of others than those of whom we have written, it will continue conquering peace and territory until every continent and every hamlet thereon will have its "wonder working wire," that great missionary of the Most High, which even now counts almost a million miles of line and probably twenty-five thousand stations. So long as men read and admire its operations during the late war, they will rejoice in the skill and fidelity, vigilance and energy, aid and devotion, exercised and displayed by the officers and men of the Military Telegraph Corps. Its achievements, silently performed, were as silently accepted. Its conquests were unheralded; its victories found voice in no general order from department or army head-quarters, and rhetoric and metaphor lent none of their charms or graces to sound abroad its bloodless conquests. Its slender swaying iron thread stretching over plain, winding through the silent forest, creeping over the rugged mountain, leaping across the oozing swamp and bayou, stealing beneath the turbid river, along the busy railroad, noiseless, yet always speaking, silent, yet eloquent, mysterious, yet ever obedient, bore alike the stern military order, the first word of victory to an anxious, waiting nation, or the sad, sad message of defeat or death. Denied recognition commensurate with its work, the Corps without organization, except such as was possible with volunteer civilians, quietly, but

none the less surely, wrought out the mighty problem—the annihilation of time and space in war—and modified the whole character of the conflict and all subsequent wars the civilized world over. While the war progressed the pulse of the people was by it daily taken. If at times of frequent disaster the beats ran high, the hand that recorded the throbs was as steady as when fear and heart-ache gave way to loud acclaim. It produced a concentrated power that caused the world to marvel; it made possible co-operative blows with such fatal power as to seem like divine command. Half a million of men were in the palm of the hand of a master commander. It was an Ægis, which enabled him from City Point to protect the entire border, thousands of miles in extent, for it guarded the armies in the field and proved a faithful sentinel all along the line. It re-assured the private soldier and civilian and all the military and civic functionaries of the Union States. It protected great cities and immense storehouses from the fire-brand of secret emissaries. It prevented many seizures upon the high seas. It even thwarted the purposes of some to seize vessels and make privateers of them, and it intercepted others upon the ocean. It captured traitors in the North at critical moments, and proved the dreaded enemy of secret societies, organized with hostile designs. It shielded secrets upon which hung the successes of the armies, for it insulated them from prying eyes and spying ears. It reduced the cost of the war by many millions. It shortened its duration by many months, perhaps years, and it saved thousands of human lives. Finally, it spread, as upon angels' wings, the tidings of returning peace, and was the confidential messenger in re-uniting a suffering people. It had sounded the tocsin call to arms, and now re-echoed the benediction upon the dismissed armies assembled in final review.

APPENDIX.

ANNUAL REPORTS OF ANSON STAGER TO THE QUARTER-MASTER GENERAL.

WASHINGTON, D. C., February, 1862.

GENERAL M. C. MEIGS, Q. M. G.:

GENERAL: The cable will be shipped from New York on Thursday, of this week, to Fort Monroe, and if no unforseen delay or accident occurs, it will be laid in ten days after it reaches the Fortress. The only cable that could be obtained on so brief a notice, was the light one to be manufactured for this purpose. It may prove too light for the service, and I would urge upon the Government the purchase of a large cable that will resist anchors. The light cable may work for a few months.

In the latter part of December, a written proposal was made to the Secretary of War, by N. A. Zabriskie, for building a line to Fort Monroe, to cost thirty-five thousand dollars. The Secretary believed the work should be done by parties already employed by Government, and requested me to make an estimate of the cost. I stated that the work could be done in a substantial manner at about twenty thousand dollars, using a cable costing three hundred dollars per mile. It was decided to construct the line with the least possible delay. The work was commenced about the 15th of January. The land line, from Wilmington, Del., to Cape Charles, will be completed and in operation the last of this or first of next week.

Including the line to Lewes, Del., which is not included in the foregoing reports, I found about twelve hundred miles of line had been constructed by Government, and one hundred and eight offices opened and maintained, employing one hundred and sixty-three operators and fifty-one builders and messengers.

The bills for material, construction and service had been paid in most instances by the telegraph companies, and the labor and

responsibility of settling these claims devolved upon me. I carefully investigated all charges, and believe those that have been settled are just and proper. In no case have I allowed profit, or commission over the original bills of purchase, nor has it been asked. The prices in the original bills have not exceeded the most favorable rates paid by the leading telegraph companies. The telegraph companies, in many instances, furnished material and facilities at a considerable sacrifice to their own lines.

The lines in each Military Department radiate from the center, or head-quarters of the general commanding, to each camp, or outpost. The effect of this is to render it the most reliable for ordinary communication, and at the same time valuable for field purposes. The interruption from any cause of either of the radiating lines does not affect the others, and the contents of communications to one division or camp, can not be known to the other, except by the direction of the officer at the central office. These wires will be extended as fast as the army advances. The commanding general, if near either of the radiating lines, can be connected at a moment's notice with either or all of the divisions of his army, by the aid of the central office. Some of the advantages of this plan are that the lines are easily protected and maintained, being located on routes occupied by by our troops. No extra force or organization is required as would be in an exclusive "Field Telegraph Corps." The danger of interruption by crossing fields, ravines, creeks, etc., is avoided.

The military lines and offices are open for business day and night. During the night the operators are required to report themselves every half hour, so that an interruption of the line or neglect of duty can be known. At each important post or camp an efficient operator is employed, whose duties are in connection with the operating department to put in cipher and translate all important despatches. Each department has been supplied with an amount of wire, insulators, instruments, field cordage and submarine cables sufficient for an emergency, and the extension of lines to follow the march of each division of the army. A considerable force of builders are in readiness with full equipments, who with the aid and protection of troops can push forward the lines ten or fifteen miles per day.

The safeguards placed about the army lines has, it is believed,

prevented the disclosure of any important information while passing over the wires. With frequent changes of the cipher now in use and the difficulty that experts would have in obtaining accurate copies of the same, it is believed that despatches of the most private nature can be safely entrusted to the lines as now directed.

A large number of general and special orders issued by commanding officers are transmitted by telegraph to each camp and division. By this means a considerable clerical labor is saved, to say nothing of the saving of courier service and the delay by the ordinary means of communication.

Great care is exercised in regard to the loyalty of all persons connected with this Department. The oath of allegiance is required of every employé. The offices are guarded from intrusion of persons not immediately connected with its operations.

Up to the present time the Government has not taken possession of any telegraph line operated or controlled by corporations or individuals, although the owners understand that their lines are subject to the order of the Government for special or extraordinary service at any and all hours, and that preference shall be given to all Government business. Upon the lines where the greatest amount of Government service is performed, the commercial business is greatly depressed and but comparatively small revenue derived by the telegraph companies from this source. Yet to meet the wants of the Government, the telegraph companies are compelled to keep up the same organization and equipments as formerly, and without extra compensation. In no place have I found the Government service upon a line large enough to justify Government in assuming the entire running expenses of the same, nor can I recommend such a course as long as the telegraph companies perform the service promptly and faithfully.

Greater efficiency and economy in the Telegraph Department would be secured by the prompt supply of funds for the pay of operators, builders, etc., and purchase of materials. No provision is made for the expenses of operators, except their salary, and as they are subject to frequent and sudden changes, they should be paid promptly. A better class of operators can be

engaged, if pay is certain and prompt. The labor and responsibility of the General Manager can be relieved and the public service greatly enhanced by the allowance of one clerk for each military department. The Quarter-master General has not yet made any allowance for clerk hire, although the disbursements of this service extend to the outposts of all the military departments. I respectfully ask the attention of the Secretary of War to the above requests.

It is but just to state, in concluding this report, that the telegraph companies have at all times evinced the most liberal and loyal spirit. They have tendered to the Government all facilities possessed by their lines. With few exceptions, they have transmitted the messages of the Government Telegraph Department regarding purchase and shipment of material, and other urgent correspondence, without charge. At telegraph stations where military lines terminate, they furnish room, light and fuel, and the labor of repeating army business without compensation. No commissions are charged for the material manufactured or supplied the Government.

The assistant managers appointed are all practical telegraphers, of tried integrity and extensive experience. Many of the operators employed rank as the best in the country, and are devoted in their efforts to render the telegraph invaluable to the public service. It is estimated that the number of Government messages transmitted over the lines in the "Department of the Potomac," averages one thousand per day.

Very respectfully, ANSON STAGER, *Capt. and A. Q. M.*,
Supt. U. S. Military Telegraphs.

REPORT OF COLONEL A. STAGER, ASSISTANT QUARTER-MASTER AND SUPERINTENDENT OF THE UNITED STATES MILITARY TELEGRAPH, FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 1863.

GENERAL M. C. MEIGS, Q. M. G.,
Washington, D. C.:

GENERAL: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your "General Order, No. 13," dated Washington, D. C., July 22, 1863, and submit the following report of the operations and conditions of the United States Military Telegraph, for the fiscal

year 1863, as my reply thereto, respectfully calling your attention to the accompanying reports of the different quarter-masters under my control. Their reports contain details of the operation of the Military Telegraph in the respective Departments to which they are assigned. The report of Major Eckert, Assistant Superintendent of the Department of the Potomac, is marked "A;" Captain Bruch, Assistant Superintendent of the Departments of Ohio, Cumberland and Mississippi "B;" Captain David, Assistant Superintendent Department of Western Virginia, "C;" Captain Wade, Cleveland, Ohio, "D;" Captain Smith, Assistant Superintendent Department Missouri, "E," and that of Captain Bulkley, Assistant Superintendent Department of the Gulf, "F."

Since my appointment as Aide-de-camp, Assistant Quartermaster and Superintendent of the United States Military Telegraph, I have been commanding officer in charge of the Military Telegraph in the United States. My head-quarters, from the commencement of the fiscal year, ending in June, 1863, up to the 1st of April, were at Washington, D. C. In April, I was ordered by the Honorable Secretary of War, to make a personal tour of observation of the Military Telegraph in the West and South-west, and to make my head-quarters, hereafter, in Ohio. I was on special duty at Memphis, Tenn., and Cairo, Ill., by the order of the Honorable Secretary of War.

It is my duty as commanding officer of the Military Telegraph Department, to exercise a general supervision of all its lines; to give such orders and direction to the subordinate officers in this branch of the public service, as may from time to time be necessary for the better conduct of the relative affairs and business therein, and to supervise the purchase of all the material which the wants or exigencies of the various Departments may demand.

The Military Telegraph lines required by the Government have been constructed over an extensive and scattered territory, embracing parts of the States of Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Maryland, Delaware, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Arkansas, Tennessee, Kentucky, Missouri, Kansas and the Indian Territory.

Under the immediate direction of Major Eckert, Assistant

Superintendent Department of Potomac, three hundred miles have been constructed during the fiscal year. Under the direction of Captain Smith, Assistant Superintendent Department of Missouri, five hundred and forty-eight miles have been constructed during the year. Under the direction of Captain Bruch, Assistant Superintendent Departments of Ohio, Cumberland and Mississippi, five hundred and ten miles have been constructed during the year. Under the direction of Captain David, Assistant Superintendent Department of Western Virginia, ninety-seven miles have been constructed during the same period. Under the direction of Captain Bulkley, Assistant Superintendent Department of the Gulf, three hundred miles have been built as above. On the first day of July, 1862, there were three thousand, five hundred and seventy-one miles of land and submarine lines in working order. During the fiscal year, one thousand, seven hundred and fifty-five miles of land and submarine line were constructed, making the total number of miles of land and submarine military telegraph lines in operation during the fiscal year, five thousand, three hundred and twenty-six, being length of line sufficient to girdle more than one-fifth of the circumference of the globe.

It should be borne in mind that a large proportion of this labor has been performed as it were, in the presence of an armed foe. Sometimes the lines have been required to take their course through portions of the revolted States, actually in the possession of the enemy, and upon such occasions, the constructing parties have been obliged to perform their labor during the night time only, to avoid detection and capture by the enemy. It would be difficult to enumerate the hazards, vexations and obstacles incident to the construction of military telegraph lines. The telegraph is ever at the front, occupying the post of danger and of honor. It has been frequently in advance of the army, and it can not be denied but that the result of its enterprising hazard has often proven of much advantage to our forces. But few cases of capture of telegraphers by the enemy have occurred, when these experts have voluntarily assumed advanced and exposed positions.

Follow the army where you will, there you will find the telegraph exercising its vigilance and its protection over the sur-

rounding camps. At the foremost picket posts, in the rifle pits and in the advanced parallels, at any hour of the day or of the night, you can listen to the mysterious, yet intellectual click of the telegraph instrument amidst the strife of battle and the whistling of bullets, its swift, silent messengers pass unseen and unharmed. It is through the medium of the telegraph that the vast amount of supplies of various descriptions required for the daily sustenance of the armies are ordered forward from their depositories. If an advance of the army is to be made, all deficiencies to the comfort and necessities of the troops, or any lack of the material of war, can, by the assistance of the military wires, be immediately ordered and speedily procured. If a retrograde movement is contemplated, all detachments adjacent to the line of march are quickly notified by telegraph, and the whole column is in motion at once. The public mind has but a faint conception of the magnitude of the uses of the army telegraph. Its importance and utility in a military campaign is fully understood only by those who are constantly brought into contact with it as a medium for the daily transaction of their important and extensive business. The Military Telegraph offices are kept open day and night—the lines never being closed to the transaction of business. The War Department and the General-in-Chief at Washington are in constant telegraphic communication with the commanders of the armies both East and West.

As an illustration of the importance and usefulness of the military and commercial telegraph to the Government, I will refer to the fact, that under the first call for three hundred thousand volunteers, and within forty days from the time that recruiting actively commenced, three hundred and twenty-seven thousand men were mustered into service, fifty thousand of whom were armed, equipped and placed in the field, and one hundred and fifty thousand armed, equipped and awaiting marching orders. The orders of the Honorable Secretary of War and the detailed instructions from the various bureaus of his department pertaining to the mustering, clothing, equipping and arming of these troops, together with the correspondence of the War Department with the various State authorities, were transmitted by telegraph. Without the aid of the telegraph, weeks instead of days would have been required to accomplish the

work. Take a glance along the military railroads of the country and in quiet company with the long continuous band of iron rail, you can not but observe the air lines of iron wire through which the electric winged messengers of thought flash the orders of our commanders from one section of the country to another. A distant command on some part of the line receives, through the means of this lightning communication, its orders to move forward and create a diversion in favor of the struggle which is going on in some other part of the line and perhaps by destroying the enemy's line of communication or his supply trains, a victory is won. General orders are given—armies are moved—battles are planned and fought, and victories won with the assistance of this simple, yet powerful aid-de-camp, the Military Telegraph. Even the history of this unholy rebellion is being recorded by the electric dottings of the telegraph from day to day as the war progresses, let us hope to its speedy termination and a reunion against all enemies for all future time. The military railroads and telegraphs are the great arteries which warm the soul and keep alive the body of our grand Union army.

By a close estimate it appears that at least *one million, two hundred thousand* telegrams have been sent and received over the military lines in operation during the fiscal year ending June 30, 1863, being at the rate of about *thirty-three hundred* per diem. These messages have varied in length from *ten to one thousand words and upwards*, and generally were of an urgent or most important character. All business of an important or confidential nature has been transacted in cipher, and the contents of the telegrams thus transmitted have been known only to the War Department or general officers with whom they originated, and the sworn cipher operators. This mode of secrecy has been invaluable to the Government and of great advantage to military operations.

I take pleasure in acknowledging the valuable services of my assistant superintendents, Major Eckert and Captains Bruch, Smith, David, Bulkley and Wade. These officers have given their personal and undivided attention to the interests of the Military Telegraph, and to their exertions it is indebted for its uniform promptness, reliability and usefulness.

I would call especial attention to the paper herewith, marked "G," it being a report from Captain Bulkley upon the removal of rebel obstructions in the Bayou Teche, La. Major General Banks having called upon Captain Bulkley to remove the impediments to the navigation of the bayou, he undertook the task, and speedily succeeded in accomplishing the same. Also, to the report of Captain Bulkley, marked "H," on Beardsleo's Field Telegraph.

The operators in the service of the United States Military Telegraph, as a general rule, have manifested a spirit of patriotism and devotion to their duty, in the highest degree commendable. They are not bound by any military organization or regulations, yet they have undergone all the exposure, the dangers and privations of camp life, with a degree of endurance and forbearance worthy of mention. They have been on duty night and day, and of all the many important trusts and positions bestowed upon them, there is yet to be recorded the first case of recreancy to the task confided to them. The amount of pay generally received by these persons is not considered a fair remuneration for the service performed. Instances of meritorious conduct on the part of telegraphers in the field, I should be glad to have rewarded by favorable mention of, or presentation of suitable medals to such persons.

July 1, 1862, there was remaining in my hands the sum of $9,829.24. During the fiscal year ending June 30, 1863, I received from the Treasurer of the United States at Washington, D. C., the sum of $418,000. Total amount of funds in my possession during the fiscal year, for application to operating and constructing military telegraph air and water lines within the United States, $427,829.24. I have made a proper rendition of the same to the accounting officers of the Government. From this amount, I have transferred to my subordinate quarter-masters of the Military Telegraph, during the year, $295,265.43, and disbursed on service account $55,711.76, and to the purchase of property $70,795.99.

In September, 1862, I officially transferred to Major Eckert, Captains Smith, Bruch, David and Wade, the military telegraph lines and property in the respective departments of which they were previously in nominal charge.

On the 30th of June, 1863, there was remaining in my possession a balance of $6,056.06, in Government funds, which was deposited in my safe at Cleveland, Ohio.

I take this opportunity to express my obligation to the Secretary of War for the unlimited voluntary interest and assistance extended by himself and his department in and to the United States Military Telegraph. This kind support has contributed to a great extent in making the military telegraph what it is to-day, a reliable, useful and indispensable assistant to the Government in the conduct of military operations, both in and out of the field. It has been a pleasant reflection, both to myself and my assistant superintendents in the discharge of our official duties, to know that our efforts to accomplish all that has been required of us, have been duly appreciated and acknowledged by the War Department, although perhaps our energies may not always have realized our most sanguine expectations. The impression that our exertions have generally received the approval of the Honorable Secretary of War has been an agreeable incentive to renewed and untiring efforts to successfully accomplish the various tasks required of us.

Very respectfully, etc., ANSON STAGER,
Col. A. Q. M. and Supt. U. S. Mil. Tel.

CLEVELAND, O., Nov. 2, 1863.

ANNUAL REPORT OF COLONEL A. STAGER, ASSISTANT QUARTERMASTER AND CHIEF OF UNITED STATES MILITARY TELEGRAPHS FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 1864.

BREVET MAJOR GENERAL M. C. MEIGS, Q. M. G., U. S. A.,
Washington, D. C.:

GENERAL: — Accompanying this, my official report of the operations and constructions of United States Military Telegraphs for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1864, I have the honor also to submit the reports of the different officers and Assistant Superintendents connected with this branch of this Government service, and very respectfully solicit your consideration of the detailed operations of the Military Telegraph within the United States embraced in the several reports herewith. * * * * *

My report is designed to present in condensed form the operations of the United States Military Telegraph within the several departments:

The amount of public money in my possession July 1, 1863, was,	$ 6,056.06
Received from the United States Treasurer during the year, -	606,000.00
Amount transferred to officers is the total, - - - - - -	$612,056.06
Add amount received by officers of this Corps from other sources as per their reports, - - - - - - - - - - -	31,848.02
Shows total amount received of money applicable to the Military Telegraphs during the year, - - - - - - - - -	$643,904.08
Deduct amount of balances in the hands of quarter-masters June 30, 1864, - - - - - - - - - - - - -	34,247.77
Total amount expended during the year for construction and operation of United States Military Telegraphs, - - - -	$609,656.31
Of the last mentioned amount there was applied to the purchase of material about, - - - - - - - - - -	218,000.00
For incidental expenses say, - - - - - - - - - -	13,000.00
Leaving applicable to service account, - - - - - -	378,656.31
Total, - - - - - - - - - - - - - -	$609,656.31

As the cost of material, labor, subsistence, etc., was rapidly advanced the amount of money which will be required for the operation and construction of United States Military Telegraphs for the fiscal year of 1865, if the war continues so long, will be proportionately increased. Probably ninety thousand to one hundred thousand dollars per month will be required to meet indispensable expenditures of the Corps. A monthly average of one thousand persons have been engaged in the Military Telegraph service within the several departments during the fiscal year of 1864. The number at present in the service is considerably greater and increases as the Federal forces advance or the military operations become more active and extended.

	LAND.	SUBMARINE.
The number of miles of telegraph lines in operation July 1, 1863, was, - - - - - - - -	2,969	39¾
No miles constructed during year, - - - -	3,692	15¾
Total number of miles in operation during year, -	6,661	55½
Total number of miles abandoned during year, -	1,536	1½
Total number of miles in operation June 30, 1864, -	5,125	54

The number of miles of Military Telegraph lines in operation June 30, 1864, was distributed as follows:

	LAND.	SUBMARINE.
In the Department of the Gulf, Captain Bulkley, -	639	5½
In the Department of the South, Captain Sheldon, -	55	12
In the Department of the Potomac, Major Eckert, -	874½	32½
In the Department of West Virginia, Captain Lynch,	310	½
In the Departments of Tennessee, Cumberland and Mississippi, Captains Bruch, Gross and VanDuzer,	1732½	1¼
In the Department of Missouri and Kansas, Captain Smith, - - - - - - - - -	1,303	1¾
In the Department of Arkansas, Captain Clowry, -	211	½
Total, - - - - - - - - -	5,125	54

The estimated number of telegrams transmitted over the Military Telegraph lines during the fiscal year is one million, eight hundred thousand.

Herewith is statement "A" of quarter-masters' property received from all sources, transferred, expended and on hand June 30, 1864, condensed from the property statement accompanying the reports of the different quarter-masters.

I take pleasure in stating that the several assistant quarter-masters and assistant superintendents engaged in the service have invariably responded with willing alacrity to all orders issued from these head-quarters, having in view the execution of such demands as have been made upon me from time to time for increased and extraordinary telegraphic facilities. Your perusal of their respective reports is respectfully solicited. I heartily endorse the compliments tendered by the different assistant superintendents to the employés under their charge. These men generally have faithfully pursued their various duties with commendable reliability and often under circumstances requiring force of character sufficient to undergo many privations, resist stampedes and risk captivity by the enemy, adhering to their posts of duty with remarkable tenacity and approving spirit.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

ANSON STAGER, *Col., A. Q. M.*
And Chief U. S. Military Telegraphs.

CLEVELAND, O., October 31, 1864.

ANNUAL REPORT OF COLONEL ANSON STAGER, CHIEF UNITED STATES MILITARY TELEGRAPHS FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 1865.

CLEVELAND, O., September 15, 1865.

GENERAL:—In obedience to General Order No. 39, Quartermaster General's Department, Washington, D. C., July 1, 1865, I have the honor to submit my annual report of the operations and condition of the United States Military Telegraphs for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1865, etc. I have the honor to hand you also herewith the reports of such of the officers serving under me as have been received up to this time. That of Captain J. C. VanDuzer marked A, Captain R. C. Clowry B, Captain W. G. Fuller C, Captain W. L. Gross D, Captain J. R. Gilmore E, Captain S. G. Lynch F. The report of Major Thomas T. Eckert has not yet reached me.

My annual report for 1864 was forwarded to your Department in the latter part of October, 1864, accompanied by the reports of the several officers acting as assistant superintendents and assistant quarter-masters, attached to this branch of the public service.

It has been my duty during the past year to act as chief officer of United States Military Telegraphs, having a general superintendence over all the lines, providing the necessary funds, and supervising the purchase of material required for the operation and construction of the same. I have been very ably and energetically assisted in the discharge of my duties as General Superintendent of United States Military Telegraphs by the several officers acting as assistant superintendents in the various military departments, and I desire to accord to them the greater portion of whatever merit attaches to this branch of the public service. I have the honor to call attention to the reports of those officers herewith transmitted, and to ask the consideration of the Department to the merits of the officers respectively.

The demands of the proper military authority for telegraphic communication have always been promptly answered and I believe fully satisfied. The Military Telegraph under the immediate charge of the several assistant superintendents thereof

has kept company with our armies wherever they have gone, and upon all important expeditions; and it is a well established fact that the mobility of the army has been greatly accelerated by its usefulness and assistance. The Military Telegraph has been an invaluable assistant in the construction and operation of the various military railroads. Trains have been run and many of the roads operated almost exclusively by telegraph. The military railroads and the Military Telegraph have been great auxiliaries to the gigantic and successful efforts of the Government in suppressing the rebellion. The Military Telegraph has operated frequently in the field in conjunction with the Signal Corps, and has rendered efficient aid in this respect by diffusing information from advanced signal stations simultaneously to the head-quarters of the commanding general and the different corps head-quarters.

The Military Telegraph could be made the means of establishing the Signal Corps of the army for active operations upon a more useful basis than heretofore. The telegraph depends not upon the atmosphere, nor the weather, but flashes its thoughts alike unheeded, through storm or sunshine, darkness or light. I am however of the opinion that the Field Telegraph which we have operated independently as well as in connection with the Signal Corps, could be so perfected and operated as to completely and advantageously supplant the use of a Signal Corps for military operations.

In May, 1865, it was decided by the War Department that all commercial telegraph lines throughout the Southern States, lately in armed resistance to the United States authorities, should be supervised and controlled by the officers of the United States Military Telegraph, subject to specified conditions favorable to the different telegraph companies, which privileges however were to be ignored under certain circumstances. Previous to cessation of hostilities these lines had been operated to a great extent by the rebel authorities, making it necessary therefore on account of the *morale* of the former employés and the peculiar power of the telegraph for public good or evil, for the Government to exercise its prerogative in regard to the operations of the lines referred to. Under the present arrangement the telegraph companies are called upon to repair their lines and

put in good working order, furnishing all labor and material therefor, the United States to be at no outlay beyond the expense of maintaining purely military lines and military stations. An account is to be kept of all Government business passing over the lines. The account however is not assumed as an indebtedness by the Government, but is left open for future consideration or settlement.

The amount of supplies which will be required for the future operations of the Military Telegraph, so far as I am at present informed, will be such as is necessary only for maintaining the lines at present in use. It is supposed that the Government will require no more lines constructed, unless, perhaps, in Texas or upon the Western frontier.

The amount of money expended during the year ending June 30, 1865, for the purchase of material and supplies required for the United States Military Telegraph was about $300,000, $130,000 of this amount however was for the purchase of 285 miles of English submarine cable, the greater portion of which is still on hand. Probably not more than from $1,000 to $1,500 per month will hereafter be required for the purchase of necessary material and supplies. So long as the Military Telegraph lines in present use are needed by the Government, it will require about $75,000 per month to supply, maintain and operate the same. As the usefulness of some of these telegraph lines to Government shall cease from time to time, and the lines are taken down or otherwise disposed of, the expenditures for maintaining the United States Military Telegraph will be proportionately reduced. A considerable revenue to Government will probably be derived from the sale of the material now on hand so soon as the same shall be of no further use to the Government. Such of the lines as may be located most advantageously for commercial purposes can undoubtedly be disposed of to the owners of the "telegraph right of patent" within the territory through which the lines pass, and at a reasonable consideration. The less important lines can be taken down and the material sold.

The number of miles of land and submarine United States Military Telegraph lines in operation July 1, 1864, was, after deducting error in former report, as follows:

	LAND.	SUBMARINE.	
July 1, 1864,	4,955½	52½	
The number of miles constructed during the year,	3,246½	68½	
The number of miles in operation within the year	8,201½	121½	
Total,			8,323½
The number of miles taken down or abandoned during the year,	2,049	46½	
The number of miles in operation June 30, 1865,	6,152½	75½	
Total,			6,228

The 3,315½ miles of line constructed during the year were built under the supervision of the following officers, and within the departments specified, viz.:

Major Thomas T. Eckert, Assistant Quarter-master Department of the Potomac,	1,217½
Captain J. R. Gilmore, Assistant Quarter-master Department of the South,	86½
Captain W. G. Fuller, Assistant Quarter-master Department of the Gulf,	228½
Captain J. C. VanDuzer, Assistant Quarter-master Department of Kentucky, Tennessee and Mississippi,	1,476
Captain R. C. Clowry, Assistant Quarter-master Department of Missouri, Kansas, and Arkansas,	307
Total,	3,315½

The lines in operation June 30, 1865, were under charge of the following officers, and located as mentioned, viz.:

	LAND.	SUBMARINE.	
In the Department of the Potomac, Major Thomas T. Eckert,	1,824½	53½	
In the Department of the South, Captain J. R. Gilmore,	140	13½	
In the Department of the Gulf, Captain W. G. Fuller,	56	5	
In the Department of West Virginia, Captain S. G. Lynch,	303	0½	
In the Department of Kentucky, Tennessee and Mississippi, Captain J. C. VanDuzer,	2,127½	1½	
In the Department of Missouri, Kansas and Arkansas, Captain R. C. Clowry,	1,702	1½	
	6,152½	75½	
Total,			6,228

It is estimated from the commencement of the rebellion up to June 30, 1865, there have been constructed and operated about *fifteen thousand miles* of United States Military Telegraph land, submarine and field lines.

From May 1, 1861, up to December 31, 1862, $22,000 per month sufficed to construct and maintain United States Military Telegraphs. For the year 1863, about $38,500 per month was required for the same purpose. During the year 1864 the Military Telegraph was greatly extended and required about $93,-500 per month. From May 1, 1861, to June 30, 1865, $2,655,-500 have been received by me from the United States Treasury and disbursed or transferred by me for the construction, maintainance and operation of United States Military Telegraphs. Herewith please find statement of public moneys received during the year, and form "A" embracing all the articles of property received by me during the same period. I have no occasion to use forms B, C, CC, D, E, F or G. I have the honor to be, General, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

ANSON STAGER, *Colonel,*
And Chief United States Military Telegraphs.

MAJOR GENERAL M. C. MEIGS,
Quarter-master General U. S. Army,
Washington, D. C.

Statement of public moneys in possession of Colonel A. Stager, Assistant Quarter-master, Chief of United States Military Telegraphs, during the fiscal year ending June 30, 1865:

On hand July 1, 1864,		$
Received from Treasury Department during year,		1,360,000.00
Total received,		$1,360,000.00
Expended during the year,	$ 149,304.72	
Transferred to officers during the year,	1,210,695.28	
Remaining on hand June 30, 1865,		
Total,		$1,360,000.00

Statement of Quarter-master's property received by Colonel A. Stager, Chief Quarter-master United States Military Telegraphs, for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1865: English submarine cable purchased during the year ending June 30, 1865, 284 miles and 1,070 yards. English submarine cable transferred during the year ending June 30, 1865, 284 miles and 1,070 yards.

NOTE.— The final report, *viz.*, that for the fiscal year, ending June 30, 1866, is substantialy shown herein, beginning at page 346.

ROLL OF UNITED STATES MILITARY TELEGRAPH OPERATORS.*

A.

Abrams, H. H.
Adams, Milton.
Alexander, E. P.
Allen, J.
Allen, James M.
Allen, Hudson J.
Allen, J. H.
Allen, John C.
Allen, Thomas.
Allen, W. E.
Allen, W. F.
Allis, Geo. B.
Allyn, John.
Altermeyer, Wm F.
Anderson, Joseph.
Anderson, Wm. C.
Andrews, M. S.
Aplin, A. N.
Applebaugh, W. K.
Armes, W. J.
Armor, Thos.
Armstrong, Ewing L.
Armstrong, S. T.
Ashley, W. N.
Ashley, G. W.
Atwell, Jos. W.
Atwater, E. W.
Atwater, H. H.
Atwater, Wm.
Aughinbaugh, D. C.

B.

Bacon, Duncan T.
Baker, A. L.
Baker, C. H.
Baker, Robert A.
Baker, Wm. H.
Baldwin, A. J.
Baldwin, C. P.
Baldwin, G. Wrisley.
Baldwin, M. C.
Bancroft, Wm. A.
Barnes, Cassius M.
Barrett, Clinton S.
Barron, W. C.
Barry, J. B.
Barth, M. H.
Barth, Samuel.
Bassett, F. H.
Bassett, Milton H.
Bassett, W. F.
Bates, Ed. E.
Bates, D. Homer.
Bauer, W. H.
Baxter, G. W.
Bay, J. W.
Bay, Wm.
Beal R. J.
Beaumont, Henry P.
Bear, Jacob K.
Beck, G. H.
Beckwith, Samuel H.
Bell, Geo. W.
Beman, C. D.
Bender, R. W.
Benedict, C. H.
Benner, F.
Benner, R. M.
Bennett, W. R.
Besanson, Chas. W.
Benson, F. N.
Bentley, Jas. N.
Benton, H. W.
Berry, C.
Berry, D. T.
Berry, H. B
Berryhill, Thos. R.
Bickford, F. T.
Biggert, W. L.
Bigger, Samuel S.
Bishop, H. H.
Blackburn, Robert.
Blades, L. J.
Blair, J.
Blawcan, G.
Bliestine, G. W.
Blish, Jr., Joseph.
Bliss, A. H.
Bliss, J. E.
Bliven, C. E.
Bliven, R. H.
Bodell, Wm. J.
Bogardus, Henry A.
Bohle, Rudolph H.
Booth, M. K.
Booth, O. H.
Bort, C. F.
Bosquet, A. J.
Bowers, J. W.
Bowers, Philip.
Bowen, James H.
Bowerman, Henry.
Boyle, E. C.
Boyd James W.
Bradnack, Fowler.
Bracken, John H.
Brannon, Clark.
Brenaman, A. T.
Brice, N. D.
Brigham, R. H.
Briggs, Henry G.
Britney, W. H.
Brooks, J. N.
Bromell, W. H.
Bromley, O. B.
Bross, H. L.
Brown, C. I.
Brown, Edgar H.
Brown, E. O.
Brown, Edw. B.
Brown, G. H.
Brown, H. R.
Brown, J. A.
Brown, J. K.
Brown, N. H.
Brown, Samuel M.
Brown, R.
Bruner Philip.
Brush, Samuel T.
Brush George M.
Bruch, Adam.
Bruton, J. G.
Bryant, E. R.
Bryant D. N.
Bryant, James.
Bryan, N. M.
Buck, Chester H.
Buck, Ed. A.
Bucklin, W. B.
Buehler, Richard E.
Buell, Henry C.
Buell, M. V. B.
Bull, H. P.
Bunnell, Jesse H.
Burhans, W. W.
Burnapp, G.
Burnett, Brace M
Burnett, Dug.
Burnett, G. A.
Burnette, L. F.
Burns, Silas C.
Burr, Platt.
Bush, Alonzo.
Bush, Charles.
Bush, Frank.
Bushnell, Daniel W.
Butler, C. D.
Butler, Edwin D.
Butler, Edw. F.
Butler, Emmet J.
Burucker, J. L.
Byington, Dwight.
Byrne, John H.
Byrns, I. Oliver.

C.

Caldwell, A. H.
Caldwell, James C.
Camp, Samuel P.
Camp, George H.
Campbell, W. J.
Campbell, F. H.
Campbell, Wm. L.
Carey, Samuel.
Carhart, C. B.
Carroll, Alfred W.
Carver, John W.
Caruthers, Geo. F.
Case, Hardin.
Cassell, John A.
Chaddock, Wm. H.
Chamberlain, A. R.
Chandler, Albert B.
Chandler, Chas. E.
Chandler, Jos. W.
Chapman, E. T.
Chapman, W. S.
Chapman, Harry.
Chapman, G. H.
Chappell, Scott R.
Chase, C. R.
Cheeney, Oscar F.
Cherry, J. L.
Childs, Albert. F.
Childs, M. J.
Chittenden, John H.
Clapp, R.
Clark, J. B.
Clark, J. E.
Clark, J. R.
Clark, T. B.
Clarke, F. S.
Clarke, H. K.
Clowry, Robt. C.
Cochrane, A. P.
Cochrane, S. D.
Cogan, L.
Congdon, J. DeWitt.
Cogley, E. W.
Cole, Eli.
Cole, Geo.
Collins, W. H.
Collings, Jos. W.
Colstock, Daniel.
Connor, Chas. O.
Conway, Ed.
Cook, F. C.
Cornelison, John R.
Cotton, J. S.
Covell, S. J.
Cowan, H. W.
Cowlan, Geo. B.

NOTE. This list is as perfect as I have been able to make it, yet it is possible that a few names have been omitted. Those whose names are italicized are reported dead.

Cox, R. Emmet.
Couls, Dwight.
Craig, Archibald.
Craig, Hugh.
Crain, Geo. H.
Crain, Mark D.
Crittenden, J. N.
Cromwell, Geo. E.
Crouse, Jesse W.
Crowe, James N.
Cruise, John D.
Cryan, Thomas.
Cubitt Jr., Richard S.
Culgan, E. A.
Culbertson, Cam.
Cunningham, R.
Curran, John.
Curtiss, G. H.
Curtiss, J. W.
Curtiss, Leverett E.
Cutter, Henry.

D.

Dameron, Charles B.
Darlington, H. P.
Davin, Thos. A.
Davidson, Thomas.
Davis, C. N.
Davis, C. S.
Davis, F. W.
Davis, Samuel
Davis, Geo. B.
Dealey, Wm. J.
DeBree, N.
Deetz, Geo. M.
DeForrest, C. L.
DeGrove, Wm. M.
Demorest, Ed. H.
Denny, James C.
Dennis, L. B.
DePew, H. S.
DeWitte, Wm. K.
Deslondes, J. M.
Dixon, John R.
Dodge, S. C.
Dolan, Thomas.
Dollard, James.
Dorsey, Benj.
Dorchester, J. C.
Dorrence, O. H.
Dougal, W. H.
Dougherty, Abe D.
Dougherty, Christopher.
Douglass, Charles.
Douglass, James H.
Douglass, Wm. J.
Doughty, Wm. L.
Downey, G. W.
Doyle, P. C.
Drake, Wm. H.
Drew, I. N.
Drummond, Frank.
Duell, John F.
Duesner, Phil.
Duffie, F. A.
Dunn, A. O.
Dunn, Wm. A.
Dunlap, J. R.
Dunning, Jay D.
Durant, Geo. F.
Dwight, J. H.
Dwyer, Chas. E.
Dwyer, Con.
Dyer, Derrick O.
Duxbury J. W.

E.

Eaton, Wm. H.
Eckert, B. F.
Eckman, Wm. H.
Eddy, Charles G.
Edwards, Jno. R.
Edwards, Samuel H.
Egan, John J.
Elphick, David.
Elliott, J. A.
Elliott, Richard H.
Ellison, A.
Ellsworth, Henry L.
Embree, W. N.
Emerick, J. H.
Erringer, T. F.
Evans, T. A.
Everette, Geo. H.

F.

Fancher, Charles I.
Farnham, G. N.
Fawcett, G. E.
Fay, Frank P.
Felton, G. C.
Fenton, Frank A.
Ferris, D. V.
Fish, E. G.
Fish, Harry G.
Fitch, Derrick H.
Fitchett, Hamilton.
Flack, B. W.
Flagg, John A.
Flannagan, J. J.
Flesher, Jr. Thos.
Floersh, Andrew.
Florence, J. C.
Flynn, J. B.
Foley, John.
Foley, Wm.
Follett, R. F.
Folwell, Geo. E.
Fonda, Ten Eyck H.
Forbes, W. W.
Forker, James.
Forrest, J. W.
Forsey, Wm. S.
Forster, Wm.
Foster, J. J.
Fowler, J. J.
Fowler, Peter.
Fowler, Robert S.
Fox, Fred.
Francis, D. T.
Franks, H. D.
Frank John R.
Frank, Wm. H.
Franklin, Ed. A.
Frazey, G. S.
Frazier, P. B.
Freeman, Edwin C.
Freeland, John W.
French, Wm. F.
Frey, J. J. B.
Fuller, Edwin.
Fuller, Joseph A.
Furr, R. A.

G.

Galbraith, Franklin G.
Gallup, George.
Galvin, J. H.
Gamble, J. E.
Gamble, R. E.
Gardner, O. A. A.
Garland, J. G.
Garland, Geo.
Geiger, Jno. M.
Gelpin, W. D.
Gentry, W. D.
Geyer, H. P.
Gibson, Wm.
Gifford, Carl.
Gilbert, Homer W.
Gile, Courtland, H. B.
Gilkerson, Joseph H.
Gilmore, B. F.
Gilmore, James R.
Glasier, Julius M.
Glass, B. B.
Glass, Frank M.
Glasscott, H. H.
Glazier, J. H.
Goalding, Geo. J.
Godfrey, Geo. H.
Gordon, M.
Graham, M. B.
Graham, Richard.
Graham, Wm. N.
Grausby, Wm.
Graves, E. H.
Gregg, Chas. M.
Gregg, Henry L.
Gregg, John C.
Gregg, J. W.
Gregory, G. M. D.
Green, E. C.
Green, C. M.
Griffin, Alonzo D.
Griffin, Robt. B.
Griffin, Stockton L.
Griffith, C. H.
Griswold, H.
Griswold, Martin E.
Grogan, John.
Gross, Wm. L.
Gross, Chas. F.
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